

Ralph Lauren After Hours • Too Much *Twin Peaks*? • Clay Felker Unleashed

OUR STAR-STUDDED
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DECATHLON!

Crime Pays!

BUT IS THE MOB RECESSION-PROOF?

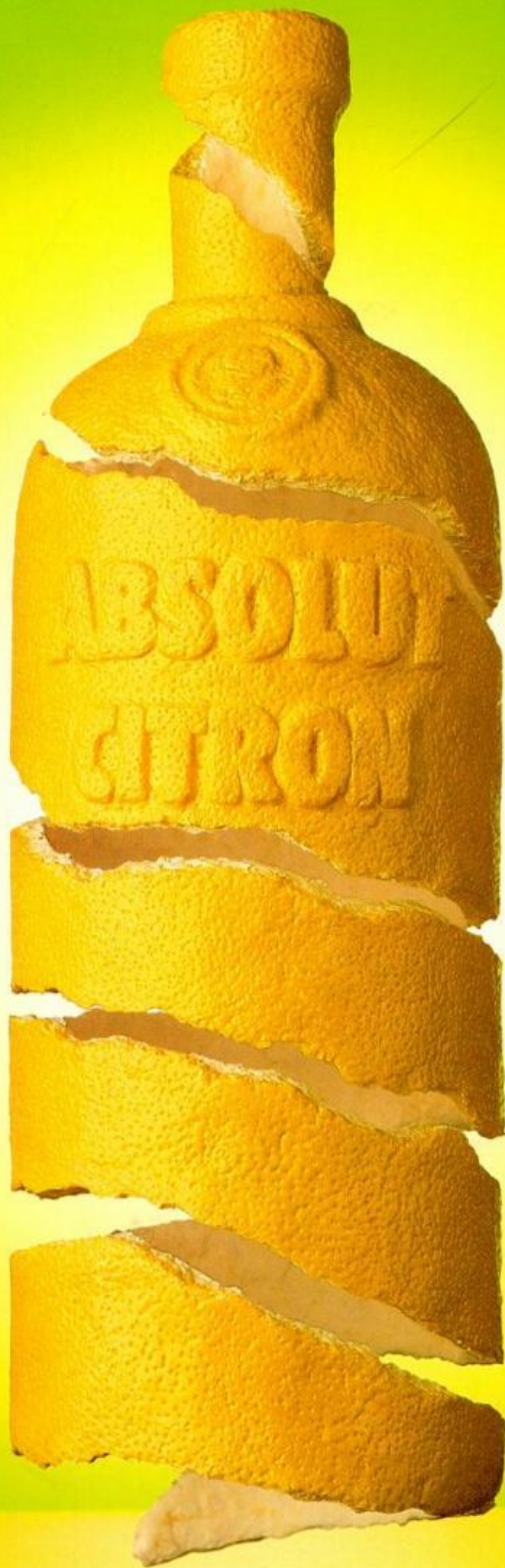
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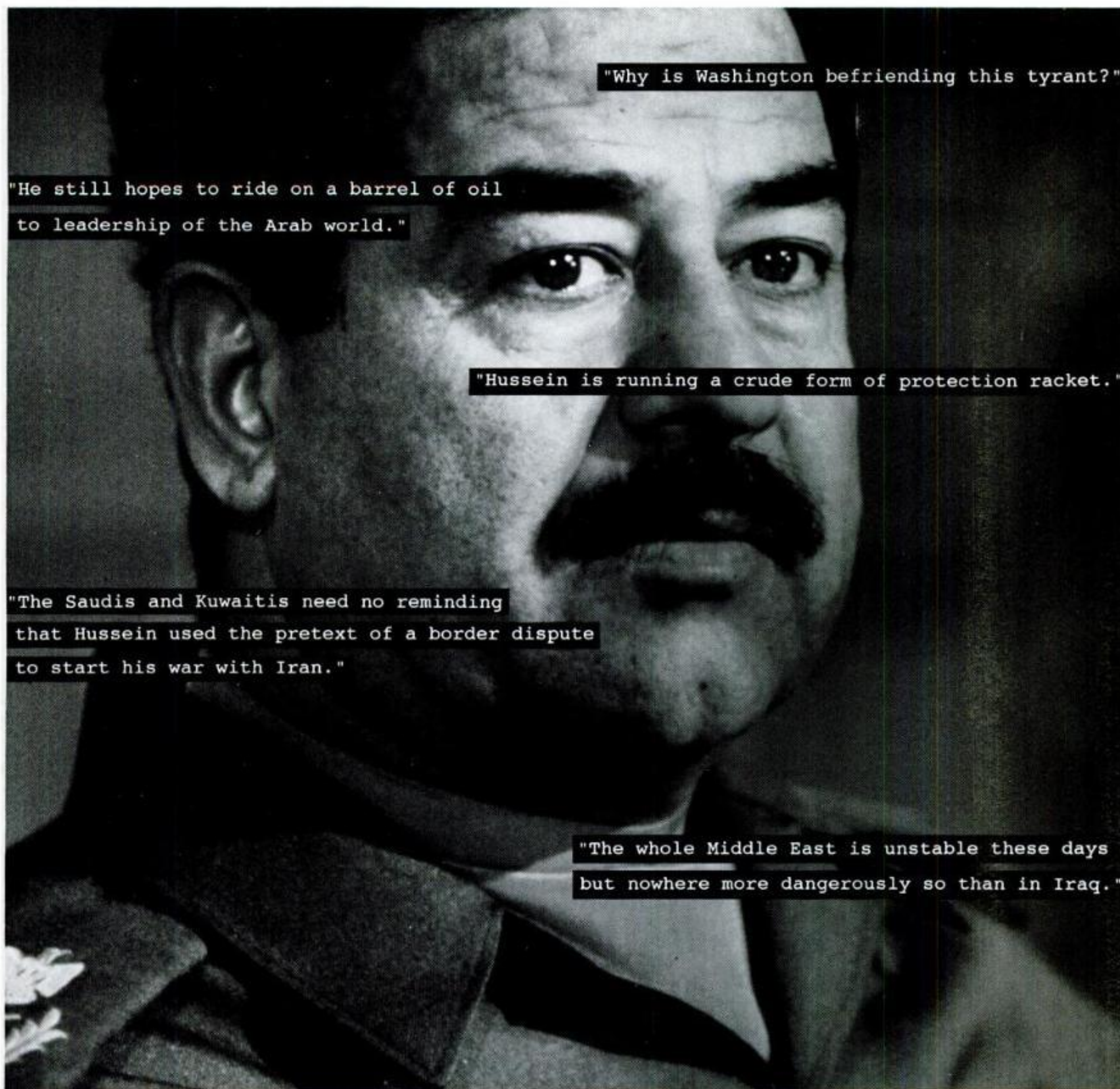
Peter Falk as
That Strictly Legitimate
Businessman

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"Why is Washington befriending this tyrant?"

"He still hopes to ride on a barrel of oil to leadership of the Arab world."

"Hussein is running a crude form of protection racket."

"The Saudis and Kuwaitis need no reminding that Hussein used the pretext of a border dispute to start his war with Iran."

"The whole Middle East is unstable these days but nowhere more dangerously so than in Iraq."

Forbes attacked Saddam Hussein last December.

Last year, when Washington was trying to befriend the Iraqi dictator, Forbes saw him as a dangerous foe. One whose power comes from the barrel of a pistol. And as we reported in our December '89 article, this power, backed by a battle-hardened, million-man army posed a real threat to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Our assessment of Hussein was right on target. In fact, we called Washington's tilt toward Iraq "one of the least sensible twists in U.S. foreign policy." What were the decision-makers thinking of then? And what were they thinking of in 1980 when, just weeks before he attacked Iran, we warned that the "most brutally repressive ruler in recent history" was suffering from delusions of grandeur?

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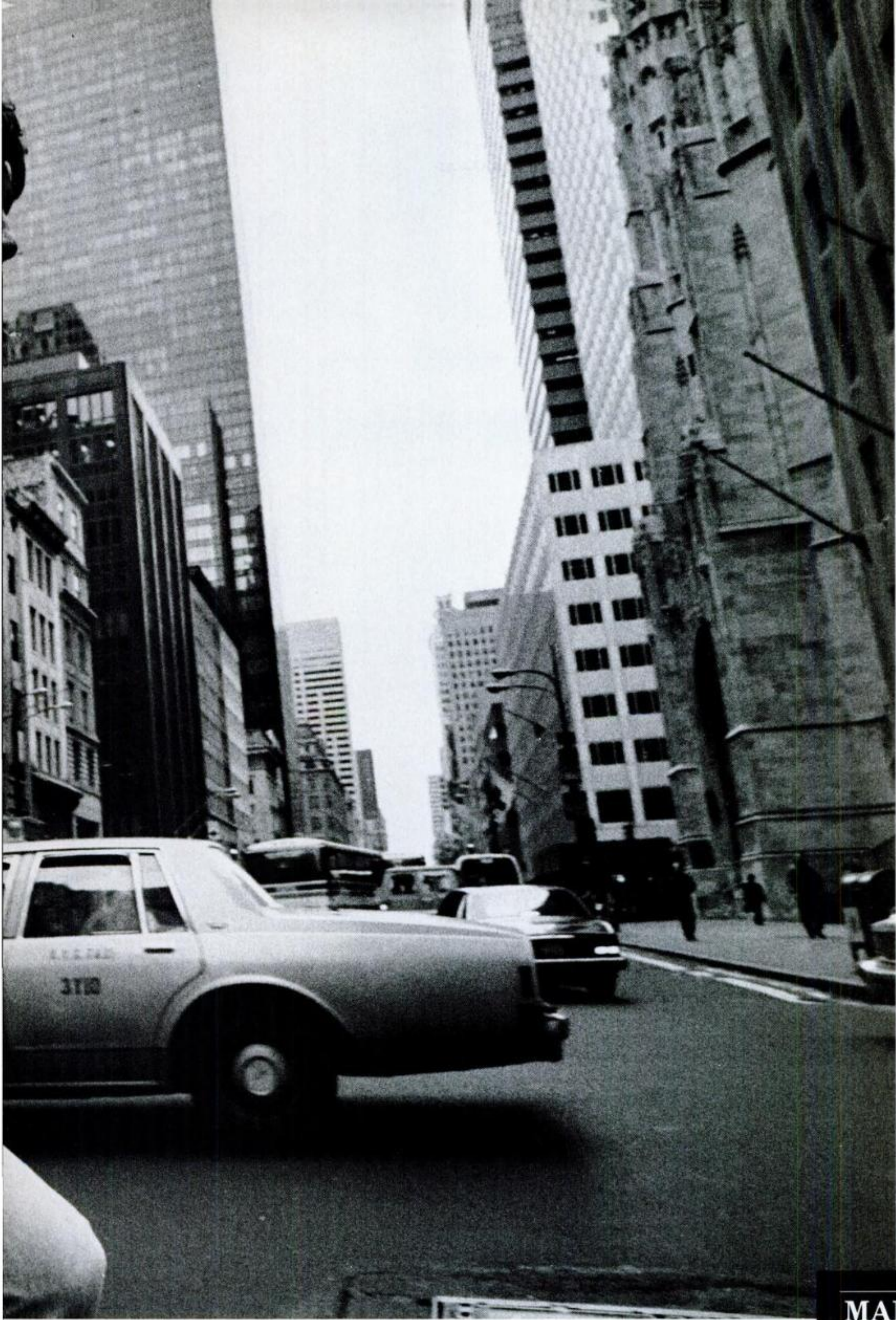
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THE COVER
Peter Falk photographed by
Bonnie Schiffman. Jeana
Wilson courtesy of L.A.
Models. Styled by Barbara
Tfank. (Further information
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NAKED CITY

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► This year's Special Bicoastal Classic pits party-hardened East Coast vets (Mort Zuckerman, Morgan Entrekin) against semi-glamorous Hollywood comers (Beau Bridges, Molly Ringwald). JOHN BRODIE, MICHAEL HAINEY and LELAND SCOTT provide play-by-play and launch a daring Navy SEALs-type commando assault on East Hampton. *Be there* 68

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INTRODUCING
POUR MONSIEUR

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In order to cover this year's Ironman Decathlon III, SPY reporter **JOHN BRODIE** was obliged to spend the weekend in eastern Long Island (accompanied by fellow SPY operatives Michael Hainey and Leland Scott), mingling with daunting VIPs and exposing himself to the potentially harmful rays of the sun. Brodie has also written for us about the science of celebrity-garbage analysis, the high-concept brothers William and Lawrence Lucas and, in this issue, the fiscal-year-1990 performance of organized crime.



The research and reporting that contributing editor **HOWARD KAPLAN** has done for SPY has tended to be of a slightly less glamorous nature than Brodie-Does-the-Hamp-tons. A tireless archivist in the tradition of the Library of Congress and Andy Warhol,

CONTRIBUTORS

Kaplan has revealed examples of Logrolling in Our Time since our May 1988 issue. His One-Minute Reviewer debuts in this issue.



For her column in this issue, part-time Canadian **PATRICIA PEARSON** traveled over the border to Syracuse, New York (whose municipal drinking water the purged Miss America and former Syracuse University student Vanessa Williams once cited as the cause of her bad complexion), where she attended the six-day Basic Course that is the only required training for New York State's local judges. And for her story in our June issue, Pearson joined 40 police officers at a seminar on occult-crime investigation; she is clearly at her best when surrounded by doughty men in knit pants and white socks.



RACHEL URQUHART's research for her profile of Clay Felker mostly involved badgering people over the phone—a skill she sharpened during her days as a reporter at SPY. A contributing editor both here and at *Vogue*, Urquhart has honored the pages of SPY with her guide to celebrity-endorsed perfumes and most notably her piece, in our Washington issue, on dopey American ambassadors. ☺

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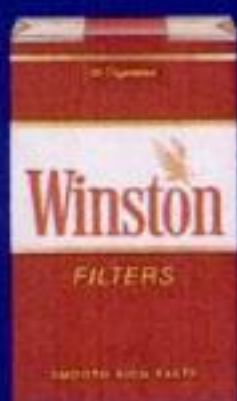
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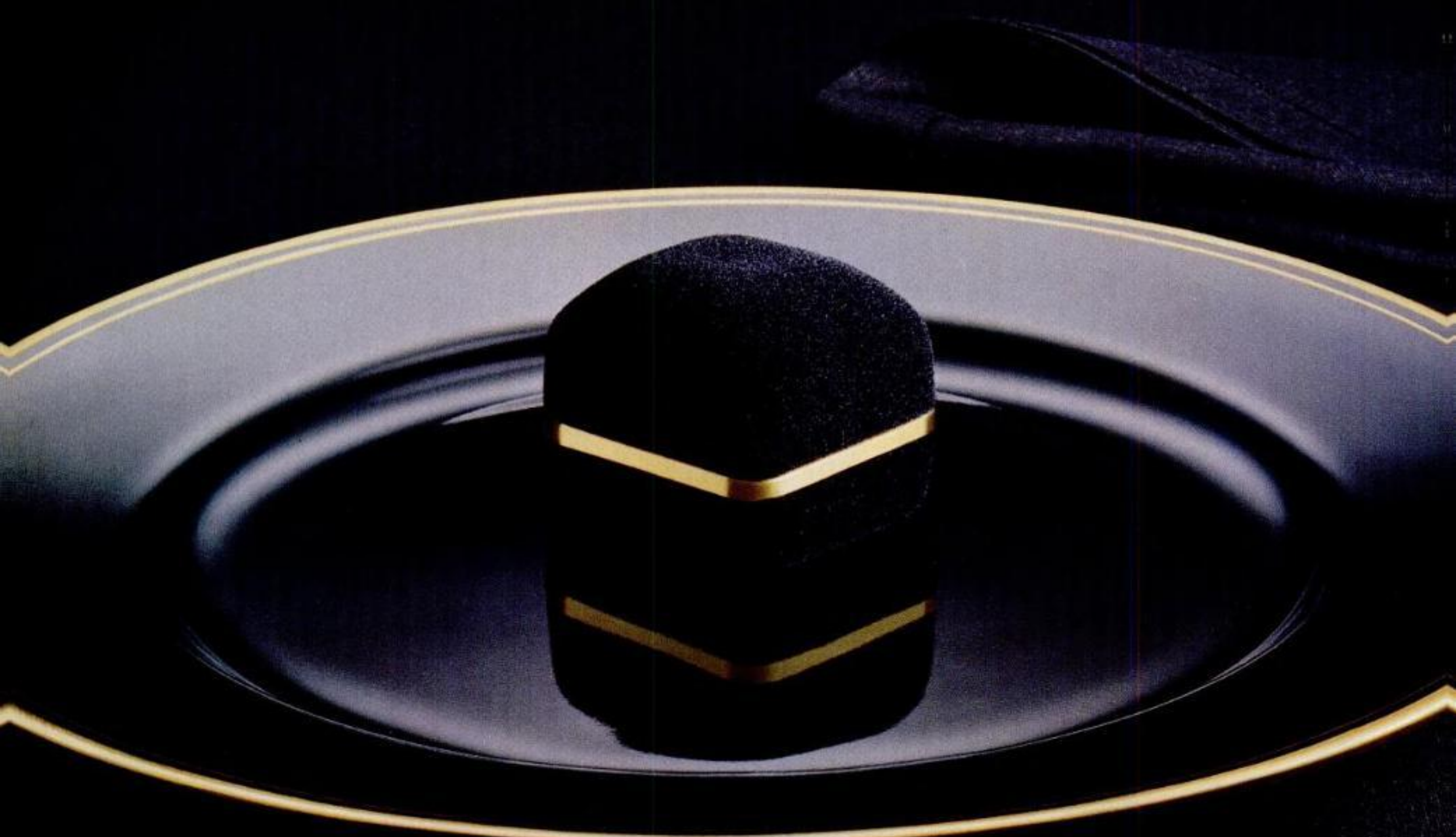
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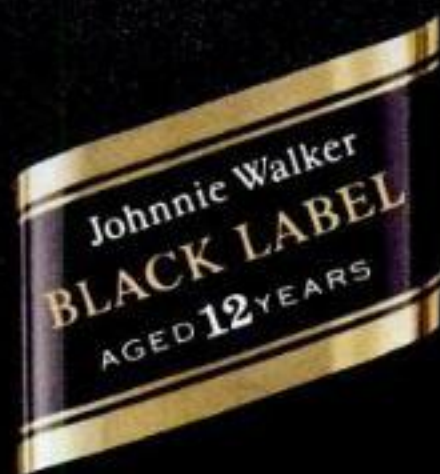
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upbringing because we had a Citroën car and three kids went that her brother's street-tough sensibility is an affectation



from an upper-class Joie, on suggestions "People have this impression that we came to private school."—Spike Lee's sister,

Every decade has its especially lousy November

EVERY DECADE HAS ITS ESPECIALLY LOUSY November—1929 in the twenties, 1963 in the sixties, 1980 in the eighties. And this November is already a strong contender to be the 1990s'

dreariest. There is, for starters, the economic implosion, which might have supplied a certain vertiginous thrill—*S&Ls ruined! LBO speculators belly-up! Investment bankers rendered moot!*—if not for the fact that the recession seems to be striking at independent New York-based satirical with some ferocity. 🍁 And then there's fever, which might have supplied a cer-ish spectator-sport thrill—*Baghdad Saddam Hussein on the run! King Hussein cover!*—if not for the fact that the pre-tivities for this war seemed to be lack-
ditional inspirationalism. Oh, sure, our propaganda apparatus was working as in the old days (Iraq's president was transformed in a matter of hours from crafty to monstrous), and it would be America's first war significantly about economics in a century, and the domestic ideological lineup snapped miraculously back to its old-fashioned 1930s state (right-wingers suspiciously hesitant, liberals itching to shoot), and CBS News was getting the scoops again. "I wanted to find out the Iraqi word for *whoa*," Dan Rather



monthlies the war tain brut-leveled! breaks for game fes-ing in tra-

said of an impromptu midnight interview with Saddam Hussein. (Hussein's intent, the CBS anchorman said, was "to put down all that talk that he is insane"; so, *of course*, he called in Dan Rather.) 🍁 But despite all the resonance with wars past, our own president somehow did not quite

evoke FDR, or JFK, or even RWR. As soon as he had dispatched tens of thousands of troops to Saudi Arabia, the commander in chief was asked how he intended to spend his time, and he sounded like a comedian performing a very funny, very cruel George Bush impersonation: "Might go fishing, test

the communications. Tee it up. Do something. Not going to sit idly by." He finally delivered his version of *nothing to fear but fear itself* and *pay any price, bear any burden*. "We are doing everything we can to guarantee that we don't panic Americans," the president



of the United States declared, "and that there will be an adequate supply of hydrocarbons." *Assuring an adequate supply of hydrocarbons*: modern life in a nutshell, and we can still feel the goose bumps.

To be fair, the Iraqi unpleasantness has proved the value of Bush's guy-to-guy, high-five relationships with foreign



heads of state. Who knew that foreign policy was all a matter of male bonding? Prince Bandar, the Saudi ambas-

sador to Washington, is more than just an old chum of Bush's; a senior White House official recalled recently how, a few years ago, Bandar "gave Bush an enormous party in air-conditioned tents in the desert and took him riding on the dunes in a jeep. They got stuck in the sand together." (Attention, editorial writers, columnists, Bill Moyers: when the Saudi-American enterprise founders, there is now an achingly apt metaphor—*They got stuck in the sand together*—ready for the plucking, able instantly to suggest 1991 geopolitics in a nutshell.) The same administration official has an even more vivid memory of Bush and the loathsome weenie King Hussein on a yacht a few years ago: "Bush, this tall, lanky American, rubbing suntan lotion all over the face of the king, who was much shorter."

Suntan lotion has, in fact, been a major logistic concern of the current conflict, and the Pentagon seemed up to the task: 150,000 bottles (at \$1.46 a pop) were shipped to our troops, as well as 600,000 tubes of lip balm, 70,000 pairs of sunglasses and—this item alone may have required 30 C-141 flights to Saudi Arabia—2 million pounds of hamburger meat. Dudes! Party!

Drawing our line in the sand certainly has removed almost all scrutiny from Supreme-Court-justice-to-be David Souter, a man who brings out the schoolyard bully in us (*Hey, wanker—did your mom buy you the new briefcase?*). Souter is said to be impossibly erudite, but his anodyne dweebishness is alarming, a type that we haven't seen close up since we quit going to MENSA meetings. "I generally do not read newspapers," Souter boasted a few years ago. A man who has

always lived alone in an isolated New Hampshire cottage, a man who reads nothing but legal briefs and Oliver Wendell Holmes: David Souter is the nineties.

By contrast, one of Souter's contemporaries, Elvis Presley, was everything the Supreme Court nominee is not: Elvis watched (or at least fired sidearms into a) television, and he read (or at least had the ability to go to the library and check out) books. We know this because Elvis's 1962 borrower's card from the Memphis Public Library recently fetched \$418 in a London salesroom. The price was less than Presleyana experts had expected. Indeed, a spokeswoman at the Phillips auction house told SPY, 15 of the 19 lots consigned for the auction by Nashville's Elvis Presley Museum (one of four for-profit Elvis museums operated by a man named Jimmy Velvet) went unsold—including the lot we most coveted in the catalog: "Elvis Presley's Electrocardiograph... from the date of his death... shows the trace of his heartbeat.... At 3 p.m. Elvis showed slight signs of life, at 3:10 the line was straight.... A unique piece." But the auction house removed the EKG from sale. "This is not something Phillips would sell," the spokeswoman told us. "Basically, it's bad taste." Bad taste? Where auctions of Elvis memorabilia are concerned? No way.

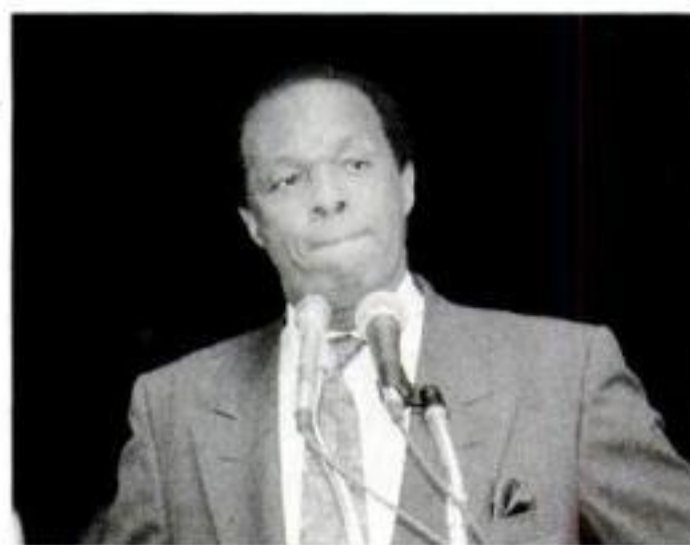
Money lust vs. good taste: modern life in a nutshell. Take, for instance, the hubbub over whether it is proper for PEN, the fashionable literary do-good organization, to be taking hundreds of thousands of dollars every year from Saul Steinberg, the obese green-mailer, and his wife, Gayfryd. Ken Auletta, the OTB executive turned author and PEN board member, finally justified his chronic earnestness

by publicly declaring that he was bothered by the spectacle of "wealthy people gaining respectability on the backs of writers" and that Steinberg was "sleazy." Mrs. Steinberg resigned from the Friends of PEN Foundation despite a sniveling note of apology signed by a majority of Auletta's 78 fellow board members and sent to her; literary socialites up and down the East Coast were made to squirm and worry as they hadn't in years. Recession and war anxi-

ety were, for a few delightful moments, forgotten.

Even the recession has had its few entertaining side effects. Locally, the eighties' last gasp is taking place in and around what we used to call Times Square. The thicket of ugly, overleveraged new office high rises is well under way—and will be available for rental just as the real estate market dissolves completely, leaving several deserving speculators wounded or worse. In anticipation of the squeaky-clean new office park that the neighborhood is about to become, the state-run Urban Development Corporation is suddenly the major Times Square landlord: of the remaining stroke parlors in the neighborhood, a dozen, including Peepland, Peep Shop and Le Sex Shoppe, pay their rent to New York State. We the people have gone into the porno business. "This project," a spokesperson for the state said of the Times Square upscaling, "has always made a big point that it is not antisemit."

The city of New York, on the other hand, is: this October new city rules regulating cable TV take effect, prohibiting dirty programs before midnight and banning all shows that "encourage or solicit... anything... under the category of indecency." The upshot is that in Manhattan, *Midnight Blue* will be supplanted by C-Span and the Lifetime channel; Al Goldstein and Robin Byrd will be replaced by Al D'Amato speeches and *Esquire About Men for Women*. One step forward, one step back: modern life in a nutshell.



Marion Barry committed his crime on TV, declared his innocence on TV,

and this month will celebrate his electoral victory—he is a shoo-in for the Washington City Council—on TV. Barry, who previously served one 4-year term on the council and 12 years as mayor, needs only 4 more years on the municipal payroll to retire on a full city pension. But that's not why he's running for the seat. No way. "To say that," Barry explained, "is insensitive, insulting and just plain insane." Insensitive, insulting, just plain insane: modern life in a nutshell? No way. ☺

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DEAR EDITORS **D**oes James Collins, defender of Eric Breindel [Letters to SPY, November 1988] = James Collins, columnist ["I Think, Therefore I Am the Coolest," May 1990]? The letter called SPY petty, vicious, inaccurate, shameless, cruel, degraded, pathetic, etc.; the column was terrific.

Seth Roberts

Berkeley, California

Yes, James Collins = James Collins. And, just maybe, petty, vicious, inaccurate, shameless, cruel, degraded and pathetic = terrific.

DEAR EDITORS **I** liked your article on conspiracy theories ["Coincidence? Perhaps," by George Kalogerakis, July], but what's with you guys? I thought all truly advanced, progressive, liberal right-thinkers agreed that something was covered up about JFK's death, that there was a "rush to judgment," etc. Now you express skepti-

Memorial Scholarship and several summer jobs with "Big Blue" in my New Jersey hometown. The only position IBM could offer me was as a copy-machine operator. I worked for a group of secretaries, whose ranks I could aspire to join within a year, I was told. I became sort of an office joke: "You were a Watson scholar? What the hell are you doing making copies? Hey, Bob, get a load of this. . . ."

I asked my manager to consider setting me up for testing and interviews for another job, maybe as a computer programmer or marketing representative. I took some tests, but I had no interviews. One day the manager informed me that if I really wanted to get ahead at IBM, "we" needed to work on my weight and make-up. I was in shock and didn't say much then, but that night I looked at the want ads, and within a week I had switched to a career in publishing (not as lucrative as the world of big business, but 12 years

LETTERS TO SPY

cism — next you'll be saying Sacco and Vanzetti were guilty, that Alger Hiss was a spy, and so on.

Larry Eubank

Jeffersonville, Indiana

DEAR EDITORS **Y**our July issue included a very damning assessment of Dr. Robert Gallo, a National Cancer Institute lab chief ["Lab Rat," by Seth Roberts]. It detailed the way Gallo misused his position, which has impeded an AIDS cure. Roberts also attributes statements to Gallo that are highly homophobic.

I was truly convinced and shocked. I wish to thank you for publishing this revealing piece.

Zane Gilstrap

Joshua Tree, California

DEAR EDITORS **I** enjoyed "Green Ties Mean Pink Slips" [by Cate Plys, July] and thought you might be interested in the following.

I was a third-generation IBM employee (in fact, I remember my father's being sent home to change from his blue shirt into a white one for a "big meeting"). I was fresh out of Bryn Mawr after four years on an IBM Thomas J. Watson

later I'm doing just fine and can even wear jeans to work if I want to).

In the meantime, my IBM manager had received the results of my Data Processing Aptitude Test; I had scored in the 99th percentile. She was promptly removed from her management position — and transferred to personnel! Where, no doubt, she has enjoyed a long career advising other eager and talented employees on how to apply blusher.

Wendy Warren Keebler

Dearborn Heights, Michigan

DEAR EDITORS **I** too used to wonder why in the world Ronald Reagan wears brown suits, until it dawned on me that Nancy "did his colors," and he came up Autumn. Autumns can wear brown, orange and red (Nancy thinks she's one, too) but not navy or gray. Hence she mostly dresses him in brown. I suspect Pat Buckley has done the same for Bill: have you noticed those unfailingly yellow shirts?

Peg Sanborn

Orleans, Massachusetts

DEAR EDITORS **I**n your July issue J. J. Hunsecker writes of a "possibly apocryphal" story about

From the SPY mailroom: Whenever we start to swagger, just tap us on the shoulder and remind us about the clipping we received from Lisa-Anne Culp of L.A. Better yet, make us reread it, preferably out loud: "EVOLUTIONARY



TRANSFORMATION is shown by the comparison of the quarter-million-year-old Swanscombe skull, nearly indistinguish-

able from modern man's, to the low-domed, thick-browed skull of the Spy man, a classic Neanderthaler." Lisa-Anne found this in an anthropology book, and it's complete with photos of the two skulls to support the thesis. The fact that "the Spy man" is in fact not one of us but an ancient skull found buried in a cave in the town of Spy, Belgium, comforts us very little. "A classic Neanderthaler"? This book is in libraries. People will see it. Being compared with Swanscombe Man and found wanting makes it hard to think about trying to write another paragraph. Leave us now — we need a few minutes.

We've had another postcard from "Frantic Fran" Lilienfeld, the 75-year-old former Borscht Belt comic (see this space, August). Her return address reads, in part, "Beach Haven, N.J. 08008, Have had series TV cable show on MANHATTAN Cable, Ch. D-10 yrs"; must be one of those new 53-digit alphanumeric ZIP codes. Frantic Fran is writing this time to leap to the defense of 2 Live Crew. We join her already in progress: "...Luther's Protestant Reformation may be at work here. Dig deeper for truth since Crusades wanting Jerusalem for Christianity. George Carlin's piece on how our English language can manipulate our thinking is great! Let me try to revive Lenny Bruce the way Elvis is. Lenny surely is born again and should lead the speech battle. Male strippers give people fun. Why not explicit songs and jokes. I'm mad. Love and knishes, Frantic Fran." Incidentally, thanks to the last postcard of hers we printed, Fran was considered for a guest spot on Chuck Woolery's new TV show. Will she still write us when she's famous?

We're delighted to report another success story, the first for our Stars ►



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WARTS AND ALL

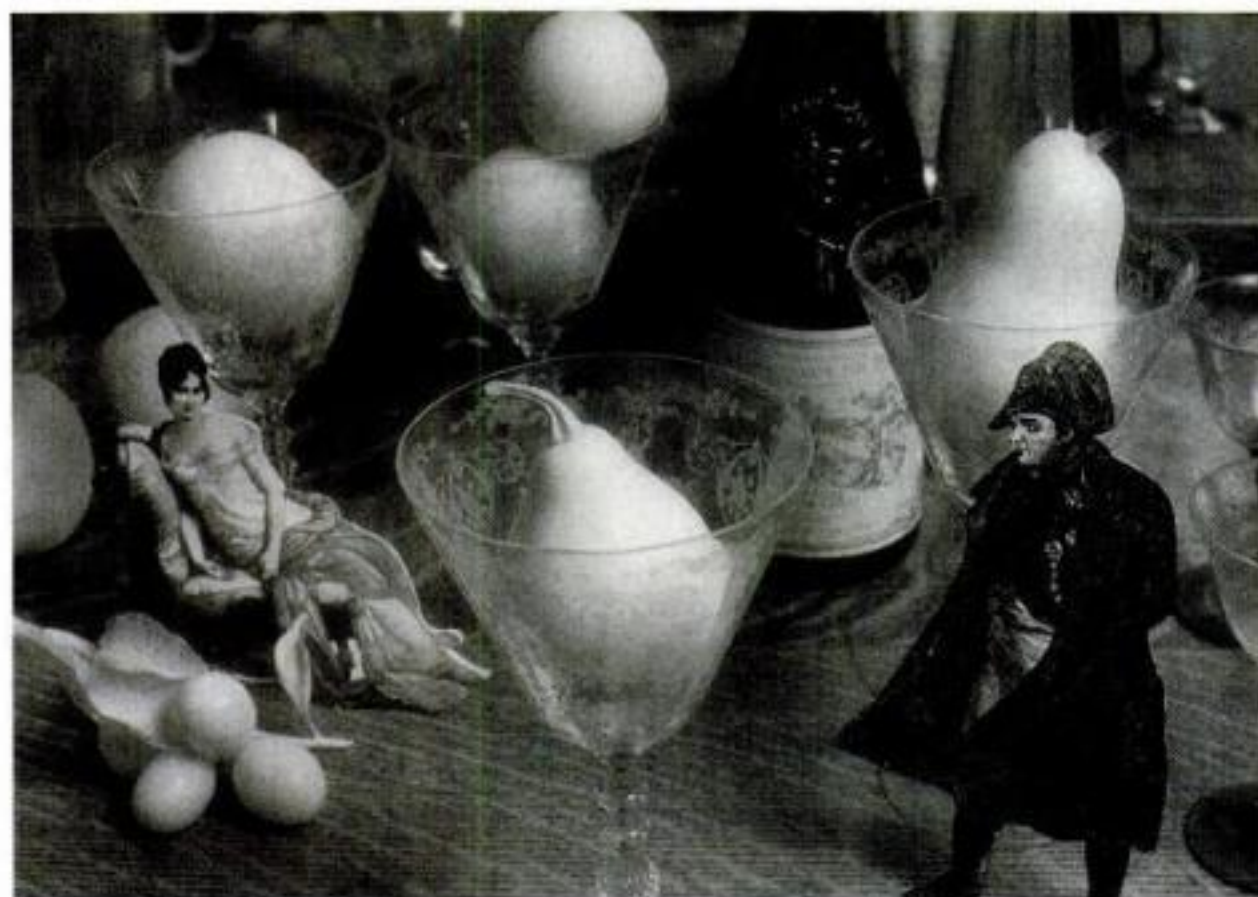
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INTRODUCTION BY KURT VONNEGUT

DREW FRIEDMAN AND JOSH ALAN FRIEDMAN

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Iphigene Sulzberger's receiving a \$10,000 check from the estate of an unknown man by virtue of having signed the guest register while stopping in a mortuary to use the rest room [The Times]. Folklorist Jan Brunvand, in his 1989 book *Curses! Broiled Again!*, discusses this story, which he first heard about in 1986 from an unnamed Harvard physics professor. Brunvand also reports that the same story appeared in Cindy Adams's *New York Post* gossip column of January 28, 1987. The story as told by Brunvand has several variations, but none of them mention Sulzberger. It would seem reasonable to say that the story is *probably* apocryphal.

Jim Lippard
Tucson, Arizona

DEAR EDITORS **C**ontrary to your July Datebook, Howlin' Henrik Ibsen never set foot in Molde during the 1880s. He spent those years in voluntary exile in Germany, as a personal protest against Norway's boycott of the 1864 Dano-Prussian Jam Sessions. Most likely, your calendar editor intended an allusion to Bjornstjerne "Blues" Bjornson, the acknowledged father of Norwegian jazz music, a genre often referred to as Jarlsberg Jazz.

Erik Swanson
Seattle, Washington

DEAR EDITORS **Y**ou reported in July that an "authentic" cord of hardwood costs \$766.72 in New York ["I See It All in Birch Bark — Rubber Birch Bark," by Elizabeth Cohen]. When I lived in a wood-heated house in Farmville, Virginia, I bought firewood from a Mr. Robert E.L. Shifflett, a kindly southern gentleman who would deliver (but not stack) a cord of cured hardwood for a mere \$60.

Please ask around your office and see if anybody needs wood this winter. If I could get six customers to buy a cord apiece, I could bring up a dump truck full of Mr. Shifflett's real good oak, undercut your big-city woodcutter and still make about \$4,000. The way I see it, your employees, Mr. Shifflett and I would all end up happy.

Bill Chapman
Charlottesville, Virginia

DEAR EDITORS I note with mixed emotions the migration of the small *National Geographic*-esque notes from the spine to the top of the front cover of your fine magazine.

As I place the August issue (which was humorous, insightful and such good fun to read) next to its companions on the shelf, THE NEW YORK MONTHLY does *not* compare with such past zingers as YOU COULD BE THE NEW MRS. DONALD TRUMP!, DOES ROGER EBERT WAX? OR PLUCK? and GORBY CAN'T TALK SO GOOD. Is there some dark, hidden meaning, or is this the sort of thing that small, New York-based satirical magazines do on a regular basis?

What are those little notes called, anyway? "Those little notes"? Could it be that *they* are "nubbins"?

Stephen Cobbs

USS John F. Kennedy

New York

They're called anything but nubbins, and yes, it's precisely the sort of thing small, New York-based satirical magazines do on a regular basis.

DEAR EDITORS The devastating brilliance of the Crybabies issue [August] finally forced this letter. Laughing out loud repeatedly this morning as I read "A Casino Too Far—Pages from the Donald J. Trump Scrapbook, 1990–96," I woke my family up. Yeow! Funny stuff, "Ms." Malinkowski [*sic*]. I can understand why SPY has kept you mostly confined to teeny type [The Fine Print]. This foray into larger type nearly killed me. This is important work, even holy work.

Neal Stiffelman

Kansas City, Missouri

Jamie Malanowski replies, "Thanks, Neal, on behalf of Ms. Malinkowski, Jan Morris, Christine Jorgensen and so many others."

DEAR EDITORS Thanks to Elizabeth Royte and John Tayman for the deft assault on all those writers publicizing the many gross details of their own sicknesses and boo-boos ["No Pain, No Story: The Strange Vogue for Personal-Injury Journalism," August]. Certainly John Milton, even on his worst day, never wrote anything as tedious as, say, Joseph Heller's reminiscence of his

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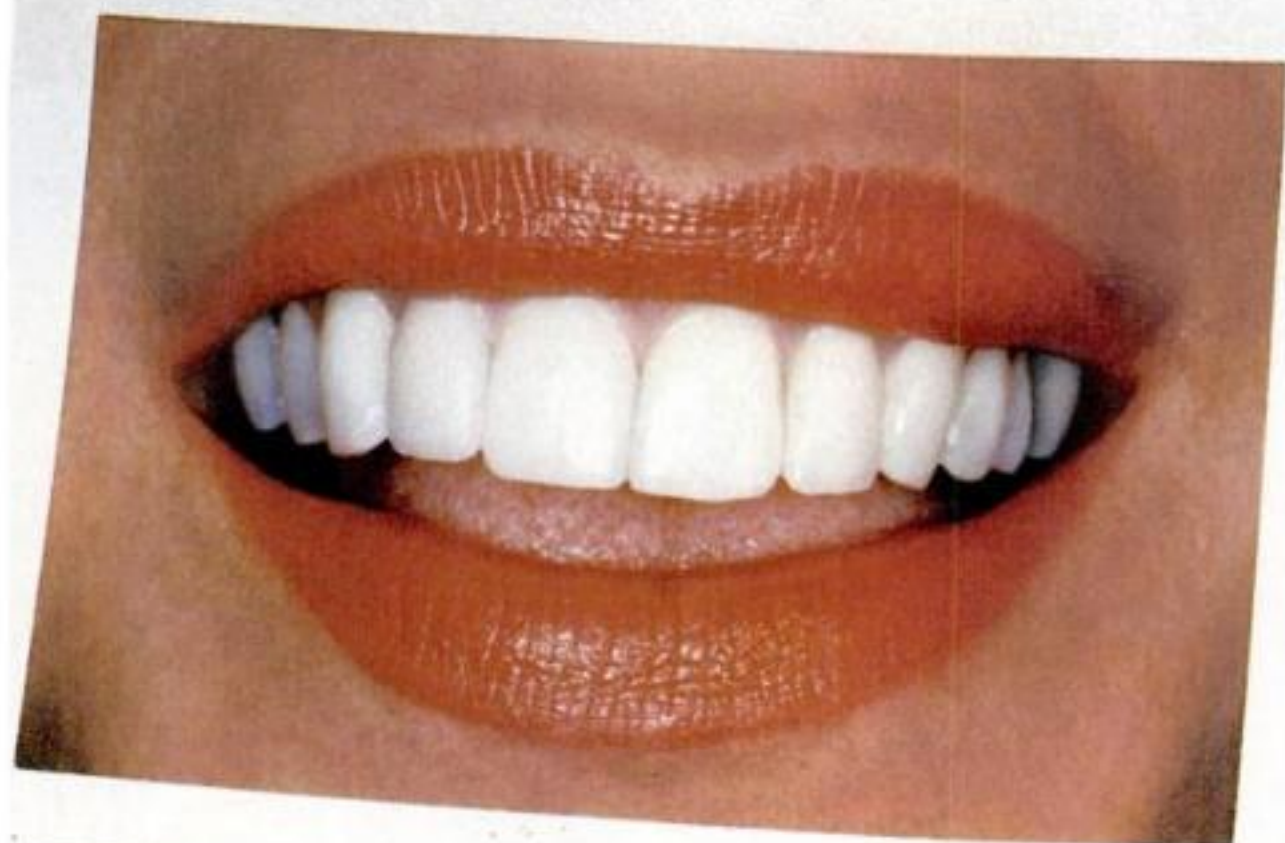
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own bowel movements. Royte and Tayman err, however, when they claim that "*Paradise Lost* doesn't reveal Milton's blindness." Note this passage, wherein the poet is addressing "holy Light":

Thee I revisit safe,
 And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but
 thou
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in
 vain
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no
 dawn;
 So thick a drop serene hath quenched
 their orbs,
 Or dim suffusion veiled. (III.21-26)

Mark Crispin Miller
Baltimore, Maryland

DEAR EDITORS **T**hank you for the August artical [*sic*] on Tone Caps ["Valley of the Quasi Celebrities," by Jenet Conant]! Business is booming!

Nikki Haskell
New York
Fabulous.

DEAR EDITORS **A**fter perusing the gut-wrenching, freeze-dried synopsis beneath Roy Blount Jr.'s rather handsome picture on the Contributors page of the August issue, I felt irresistibly compelled to write.

Mr. Blount, be neither disaffected nor disheartened by the tawdry material success of your so-called colleagues! In particular, pay no heed to the dweebish, bean-counting nurks who sanctimoniously shriek when such a minuscule transgression as graphic asymmetry is noticed within your fine Un-British Crossword puzzle, as was the case in a recent issue. In fact, you have no peers, at least not on this side of the Atlantic. You stand alone in your relentless pursuit of excellence in the realm of humble tomfoolery and innocent-but-sharp-edged wit and style.

After four years you should have amassed enough Un-British Crosswords in SPY to warrant a (pricey, coffee-table-size) compilation. Naturally, cranks and wisenheimers will point out that nobody wants to do a puzzle twice. However, they miss the point: it isn't the puzzle itself that is attractive to its devotees but

of Tomorrow feature. In July, Chauncey Monroe told SPY that his dream role was Hamlet: "Everyone who sees me do it says, 'You do it better than Richard Burton.'" To which we can now add with confidence, "And Laurence Olivier and Kevin Kline and Bugs Bunny." But we're getting ahead of ourselves.

Soon after the July issue appeared, Chauncey dropped us a card. "On the strength of the SPY article, I am now doing *Hamlet* in front of millions of people," he wrote. That's right: Chauncey had been booked onto *The Joe Franklin Show*. A letter a couple of days later described the taping: "You would not believe what SPY did for me! Thanks a lot! My career is moving! Just did William Shakespeare's *HAMLET* yesterday at 9 Broadcast Plaza in New Jersey....I rode over and back with Joe Franklin...." Naturally, we watched the show when it aired. Franklin introduced Chauncey's wife, Janet-Claire (the actress-singer), who in turn introduced Chauncey. "They voted him as Star of the Month," said Janet-Claire, holding up a copy of the July SPY while her husband prepped off-camera, "so by this article this is what I would say got him on *The Joe Franklin Show*." And then, suddenly, it was all Chauncey: shaved head, mustache, black cape, chains. "To be, or not to be," he began. For those who missed it, the Monroe Hamlet is a very human, down-to-earth interpretation—conversational, casual, with a few well-chosen dramatic touches (Chauncey drops to his knees, tosses his cape, produces a knife that has apparently escaped the notice of WWOR-TV security). For those who did see the performance, we know you'll understand exactly what we mean when we say that we will never forget it.

And it didn't end there. Two weeks later came a letter from Chauncey. After reflecting on his performance ("It was like 'a challenge' because of the way it was listed in SPY, about how people compared me to Richard Burton in Hollywood, etc."), he gave us the big news: "Subsequently, this has resulted in a Nationwide Beck's Beer Commercial, which I commence tomorrow (Monday) and (Tuesday) in which I wear the same outfit with the chains and black cape, etc., I wore as ►

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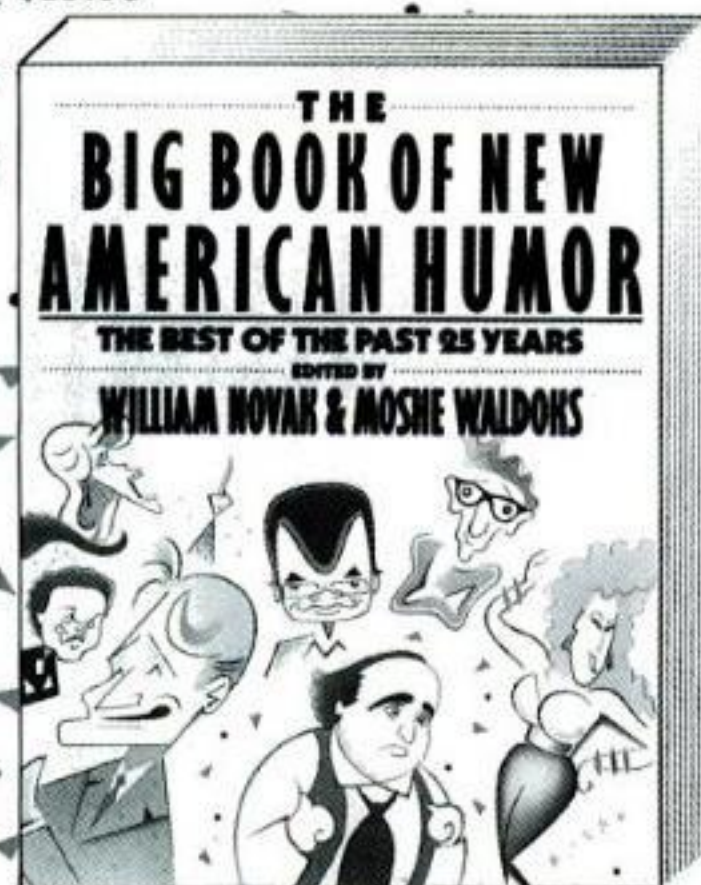
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Hamlet." To which we can only say, *We will be watching—all of us.* Now, if only Frantic Fran can get that TV show....

"When I received your June issue, I was puzzled by the odd pink-and-blue background on the cover," writes Chris Ebersole of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. "I thought it was simply the photographer's backdrop, but after consideration of SPY's deviousness I hypothesized that you disguised a subliminal message in the ambiguous design....That blotch between the heads of Siskel and Ebert could be a sprawled-out naked woman to the unsuspecting eye, and I believe there is a three-letter word written vertically in the upper left corner." One of those letters that reveal a lot more about the sender than about the recipient.

From the reneging SPY mailroom: "Enclosed please find what I believe shall be the ultimate contribution to the use of the word," writes JoAnne Wagner of Santa Rosa, California. The word, of course, is *nubbin*. She sends a newspaper photo captioned, "Sonoma County District Attorney Gene Tunney with family pet Nubbin." (He's—Gene, not Nubbin—the son of the boxer.) Wagner signs off with "Top this one!" Fine: according to the *Daily News* racing section one day in late July, the "Best Bet" at the Meadowlands track that evening was in the eighth—a horse called Steady Nubbin. (Steady Nubbin finished fifth.)

Update: We have it on good authority that everyone in Don Simpson's office is stocking up on Tone Caps, Nikki Haskell's miracle diet pills ("Valley of the Quasi Celebrities," by Jennet Conant, August). "Your article made them sound like they work," says a woman who has since left the famously fun-loving Simpson-Bruckheimer office. (She had called looking for Nikki Haskell's phone number.) We asked whether Mr. Simpson himself was a Tone Caps fan. "No." Well, not yet.

A Manhattan reader wants us to settle a \$5 bet. "Is the guy in the suit on page 76 of your March issue your publisher?" he asks. No. The guy in the

**ATTENTION FANS OF
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Watch for our announcement next month of a 900 phone line that will facilitate a new, fun way to play the game.

pearls on page 11 of our October issue is our publisher.

Encouraging news from Douglas Herta in Ngatoua. "For your information," he writes, "you have many faithful readers in the Central African Republic."

"Congratulations on the Washington issue [May]; it got me thinking what fun you could have with Toronto," writes Kevin Watson of, naturally, Toronto. Maybe we will, someday. It's on our list, right after that special Ngatoua issue we've been mulling over for the last paragraph or so.

From "Filofax Madness," by Bruce Handy, in the March 1988 issue of SPY: "One hears these formerly adultlike people fretting that the loss of their 'book' would be tantamount to death....This is a real fear: faster than you can say 'bad comedy plot device,' it would be possible to assume the identity of an overstuffed planner's former owner." Remember Hollywood Pictures's late-summer bomb *Taking Care of Business*, in which Jim Belushi found Chuck Grodin's Filofax and assumed his identity? According to Larry Haberman in screenwriter Jill Mazursky's office, *Taking Care* was written "at the end of 1989" and thought up "a couple of years ago." In other words, around March 1988?

"Are you forgetting something? What about the Japanese?" asks Robert B. Cox of Urawa, Japan. We assume Mr. Cox will write again to complete his thought. ♪

C O R R E C T I O N

In "There's a Make-Believe Fly in My Soup," by David Adam (August), we indicated that Nabisco hadn't responded to "Eulah Piggott"'s spurious complaint that insect legs were woven into the contents of her box of Triscuits. In fact, Nabisco responded in 12 days, assuring Ms. Piggott that "such an occurrence is extremely rare" and enclosing some coupons. The Keebler Company wrote us saying they'd responded to *their* fictitious complaint (vomiting after ingestion of Pecan Sandies) in "less than one week," but that the letter had been returned because the writer's pseudonym made it undeliverable. We believe Keebler—and we would even if they hadn't enclosed not one but *three* coupons worth \$2.99 apiece. ♪

rather the sparkling commentary that jackets it.

J. B. Reynolds
Graton, California

DEAR EDITORS I am a nonprofessional Canadian English teacher at a university here in Czechoslovakia, and I come in contact with many advanced-English students. These students have good grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary but are not up on the nuances of the language. During a recent last-class-before-exams, I decided to lighten things up a bit by having them try to translate Blurb-o-Mat into English. I had fun, especially when they first saw the word *oofiest*.

Those poor kids. I think I destroyed any confidence they might have had in their comprehension skills. I had to spend the rest of the class assuring them that very few North Americans actually speak like this and that they really were competent students.

Paul Billowes
Ústí nad Labem, Czechoslovakia

DEAR EDITORS **B**eing completely new to the SPY family of readers, I have decided to jump right in and get my toes wet, so to speak, by obnoxiously and desperately vying for one of those coveted spots: Letters to SPY or (please, God, let it be me) From the SPY Mailroom.

It would seem that one secures one of these positions in one or all of the following ways:

1. Come up with a new, legitimately documented meaning for the word *nubbin*
2. Be really anal about finding errors wherever possible in the almost *always* perfect SPY text
3. Cleverly compliment the SPY team whenever possible (see No. 2)
4. Inundate the mailroom with 4 billion letters that they can make fun of, until they have no alternative but to (a) print one or (b) tell you in print to stop sending them (in either case, you have made it)
5. Be irrationally bitter and insulting about an item in SPY
6. Anagrams

At the moment, I am prepared to do any



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or all of the above. I shall not rest, because at this time I have no life to speak of, so I shall continue on my attention-seeking vigil.

*Shawne Rowe
St. Ooglasa, California*

Future aspirants will have their attention drawn to another approach: "7. See letter from Shawne Rowe, November 1990."

DEAR EDITORS **R**egarding Andy Aaron's What's in a Name? anagram column:

AXL ROSE
ORAL SEX

I ask you: coincidence or wishful thinking?
*Robert Leighton
New York*

DEAR EDITORS **H**ere's one more anagram:

THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION
RAIL ON, FANATIC LOONIES. EAT SHIT.
*Ken Ritz
Portland, Oregon*

DEAR EDITORS **H**ere are some thoughts on Arsenio Hall:

ARSENIO HALL
HAIL L.A. SNORE

ARSENIO HALL SHOW
HE'S SHALLOW ON AIR

THE ARSENIO HALL SHOW
HOW THIN! REAL ASSHOLE!
*Alexander Ary
Montreal, Quebec, Canada*

DEAR EDITORS **H**ave a few anagrams on me:

SPY ANAGRAMS
GASSY RAP, MAN

DONALD & IVANA
NADA — OLD & VAIN

COVENANT HOUSE
SAVE — TOUCH NONE

DOUGLAS-TYSON II
O, DO I SLUG! I NASTY!

ROSEANNE BARR
BARES REAR? N-NO

ANDREW DICE CLAY

YEC! AN ID CRAWLED

*Charlie Skowronek
Brooklyn, New York*

DEAR EDITORS **D**oes the typical SPY reader have nothing better to do than to sit around composing nonsensical anagrams from various names and phrases and sending them to SPY?

Stupid games help remedy ennui, I'd say, yet, having done it once, I'd sooner grin, shoot spotted-moose parts from vans and snatch, or arrest, bananas that hang on clamps.

*Jeff Brown
Chicago, Illinois*

(Editors' note: Mr. Brown's second paragraph is an anagram of his first paragraph. Or at least that's what we want very much to believe.)

SPY welcomes letters from its readers. Address correspondence to SPY, The SPY Building, 5 Union Square West, New York, N.Y. 10003. Please include your daytime telephone number. Typewritten letters are preferred. Letters may be edited for length or clarity. ☛

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THE FINE PRINT

by Jamie Malanowski

NOW, FOR THE SOCIOPATH ON YOUR CHRISTMAS LIST...

We all know that many Americans have made a point of exercising their right to bear arms, a disquieting fact to which we have adjusted by pretty nearly excluding from our circle of acquaintances members of the three main groups of weapons carriers in America: coked-up drug dealers, ardent *Catcher in the Rye* buffs and overweight Republican hunters. From time to time, however, something intrudes upon this cocoon we have constructed. The most recent jog came in the form of a catalog from Phoenix Systems Inc. of Evergreen, Colorado, the hometown of John Hinckley Jr.

The 56-page catalog does not advertise anything so constitutionally protected as a gun. As a matter of fact, not everything for sale in it is legal in all parts of the country; the order form features a disclaimer that "it is the buyer's responsibility to check state and local ordinances as to the legality of ownership."

The catalog features the following categories of items:

Items for Personal Protection: U.S.-military tear gas in grenades ("Superior potency...produces severe burning sensation to the eyes...coughing...and difficulty ▶

THE BIRTHDAY BASH hyperfashionable photographer **HERB RITTS** recently threw for himself at his Malibu home attracted **JOHNNY DEPP**, **DAVID GEFFEN** and **DAVID HOCKNEY** as well as the usual troop of L.A. curiosities in eccentric, generally scanty costumes. But the party's most attention-getting guest was **MADONNA**, whose "Cherish" video Ritts directed last year. The nasal-voiced lapsed Catholic was milling about the crowd of swanky androgynes when "Vogue," her recent single celebrating the derivativeness of nineties culture, started playing. Whereas a more ordinary performer might have bowed her head in aw-shucks modesty upon hearing her own voice (or an electronically enhanced version of it) piped over a party's sound system, Madonna immediately took center dance floor and began to fling her body around energetically. After a few minutes of this weird, life-imitating-musical-comedy display, the singer apparently recognized the unseemliness of so enjoying her own recording, and slunk off.

BEING UNDER EXCLUSIVE contract to **RALPH LAUREN** can be a wonderful thing, as **KIM NYE**—the tall, Aryan, blunt-cut blond runway model who emerged from obscurity to star in Lauren's recent ad campaigns—now knows. Not only do you get lots of money and all the ersatz-nautical evening-wear you could want, but you get to involve yourself closely in every phase of the little fella's—er, big man's—creative process. For Lauren, part of this process apparently includes taking employees out for one-on-one human-resources reviews at out-of-the-way Manhattan bistros. During one such consultation, Nye obligingly met her boss's every utterance with loud bursts of almost-convincing laughter. But the fun really kicked into high gear when the couple's food arrived: the statuesque model moved over to the boss's side of the table, more or less in his lap, whereupon employer and employee, when their mouths weren't otherwise engaged, gleefully commenced feeding each other—at first using

silverware, and then, as they presumably became hungrier and hungrier, using their bare hands.

ART GARFUNKEL WAS ONCE, of course, a member of the legendary songwriting-guitar-playing-harmony-singing duo Simon and Garfunkel—at five foot nine, Garfunkel was known as "the tall one." He was in a New York studio recently to record "O! Come All Ye Faithful," his track on a compilation album of Christmas songs performed by CBS Records artists. Garfunkel arrived for the first session at about 10:00 a.m., expecting a recording engineer from CBS to meet him. The engineer didn't show, and Garfunkel left for a couple of hours. Returning at noon, he discovered that the engineer still hadn't appeared. Garfunkel left again and came back at two. Still no engineer. At this point he lost his composure and began to rant pathetically, "They wouldn't be doing this if it were *Paul Simon!* They wouldn't be doing this if it were *Paul Simon!*"

LIKE **MIKHAIL GORBACHEV**'s Soviet Union, NBC's *Today* show grows ever more troubled and fractious; appropriately, the program's producers have taken to addressing their demoralized staff with the same grim candor that characterizes the Kremlin's *glasnost*-era economic pronouncements. When the show's writers and researchers learned at a recent meeting that they would no longer receive much overtime pay—effectively reducing some of their salaries by 50 percent—they were not offered any consoling boilerplate about tough times and belt-tightening. Instead, NBC News executives actually explained to the little people that they would be deprived in order to accommodate the huge, unanticipated salaries of **JOE GARAGIOLA** and **FAITH DANIELS**—both of whom were hired, after all, to make up for NBC News executives' misjudgments of **DEBORAH NORVILLE**'s popular appeal.

WHY WE FIGHT

Getting to Know Our Freedom-Loving Saudi Arabian Allies

In case you were wondering exactly what ideals, if any, our boys, girls and billions of dollars are protecting in the constitutionless kingdom of Saudi Arabia, here's a little scorecard:

Freedom of Religion

- Islam is the official state religion; all Saudi citizens must be Muslims.
- Converting to another religion is punishable by death.
- Foreigners of other faiths may not practice their religion, even in private. Anyone wearing or displaying a crucifix or Star of David may be whipped with sticks by the Saudi religious police.
- Jews are forbidden to enter Saudi Arabia.

Freedom of Speech and the Press

- Criticism of Islam or the ruling family is forbidden.

- The king can remove newspaper editors.
- Foreign songs and programs are heavily censored, with all references to politics, non-Islamic religions, alcohol and pork or pigs removed.
- Theater and movies are forbidden, as is the study of Freud, Western philosophy and music.

The Right of the People to Peaceably Assemble, and to Petition the Government

- Political parties are illegal, and there are no free elections.
- Public meetings are segregated by sex, and sponsors of unsegregated meet-

ings face imprisonment.

- Labor unions and strikes are illegal.

The Right to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness

- Public dancing is illegal, as is alcohol.
- Saudi and non-Saudi women must obtain written permission from their closest male relative before leaving the country or traveling between cities.
- Women cannot travel alone, drive cars or ride bicycles and must ride in the back of buses.

The Right to a Speedy Trial and a Jury of One's Peers; Freedom from Cruel and Unusual Punishment

- Habeas corpus and bail do not exist.
- Detainees are routinely tortured.
- Defendants are not permitted legal counsel in court.
- The testimony of one man is legally equivalent to that of two women.
- Beheading is the usual method of execution and is sometimes followed by crucifixion. Adulterers, however, are often stoned to death. Thieves can have their hands severed. Flogging is often imposed for lesser crimes such as public intoxication.

—Michael Hainey



THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

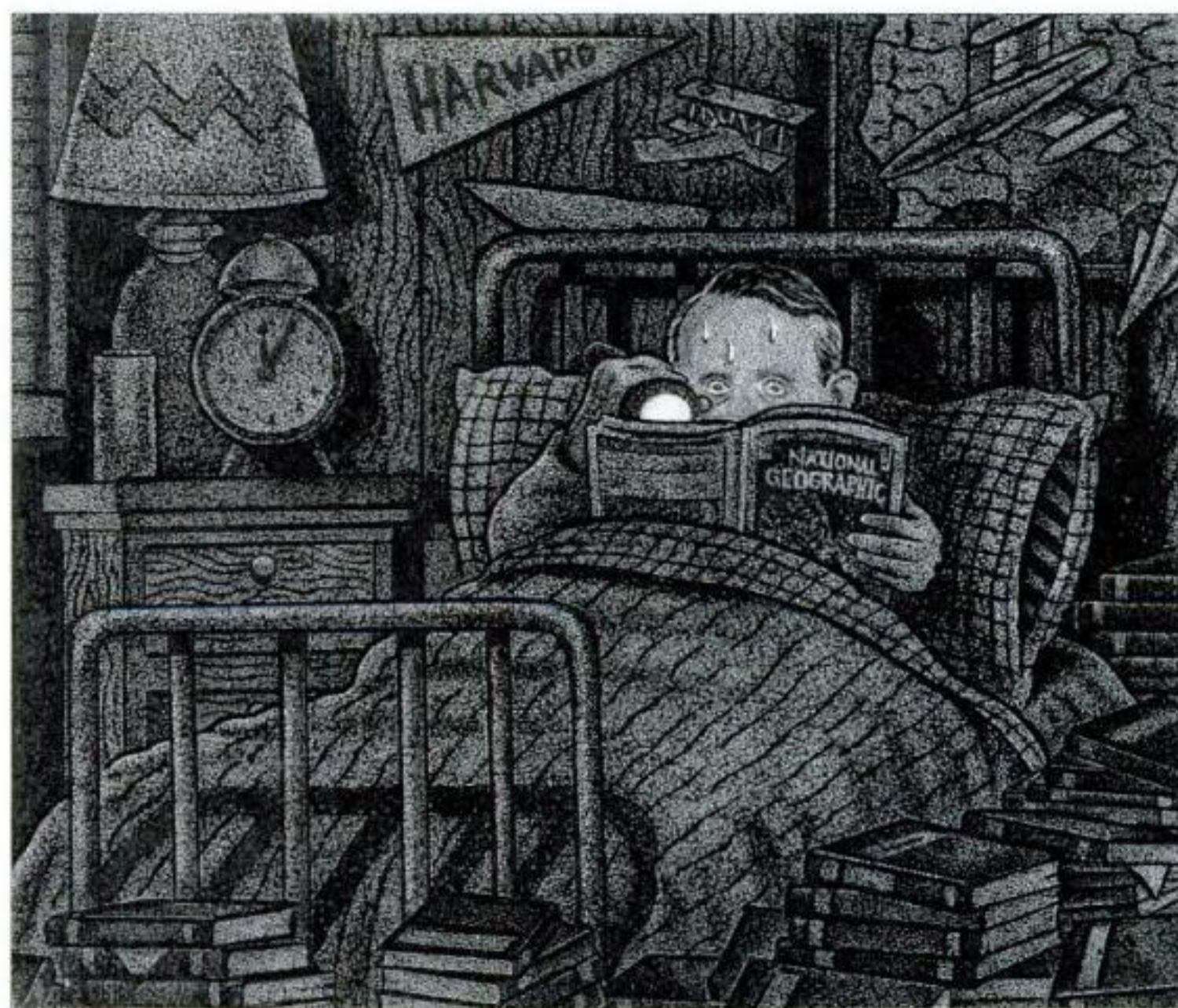
in breathing" — \$10.95); a useful accessory is the tear-gas auto-ejector, a 4½-inch stainless-steel nozzle that, when inserted through the rubber gasket around an automobile window, allows you to fire a blast of gas into the car, thus "easily and safely" removing occupants of a locked vehicle (\$3.95). The catalog also offers a variety of stun guns, including one that delivers 120,000 volts (a \$139.95 item "just released to the civilian market"); brass knuckles ("for use as paperweights only" — \$12.95); billys and saps (from \$21.50); the Kiyoga telescopic steel whip (\$59.95); a "Completely Unobtrusive" sword umbrella, featuring a 10-inch stainless-steel surgical lance (\$49.95); and a ballistic mace, a newfangled version of the medieval weapon: using a hand-held launcher, you can fire it with enough force to drive the mace head through a quarter inch of plywood (\$99.95; extra mace heads \$29.95 each).

Items for the Home:

Among the offerings that ought to be found in any garage or on any workbench are spools of camouflage trip wire (olive drab and tan on each spool — \$3.95); barbed razor tape ("Cuts and hooks into flesh.... It will force an attacker to advance into your preselected killing zone" — \$19.95 per reel); a booby-trap firing device (\$9.95); and road stars, four-pointed steel stars with sharpened points designed to induce flat tires in any vehicle (\$19.95 for a pack of ten, plus a warning sign).

Items for the Office: X-Ray Letterbomb-Detection and Envelope-Compromise Spray, which "turns an envelope translucent so you can see what's inside" (\$7.95); an electronic stethoscope ("CAUTION: Not to be used for eavesdropping or invasion of privacy" — \$199.95); and a digital voice changer ("An ideal tool for any situation ►

PRIVATE LIVES OF PUBLIC FIGURES



Supreme Court justice David Souter does some late-night reading at home.

ILLUSTRATION BY DREW FRIEDMAN

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Our Monthly Anagram Analysis

PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH
BIG SPENDER GOT US HERE

SIXTY MINUTES
UM, IT ISN'T SEXY

SAUDI
U.S. AID

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA
FEAR ICKY NEOLIBERAL

STATEN ISLAND
NASTIEST LAND

—Andy Aaron

"CAN WE MAYBE WORK CHERRY PIE INTO YOUR LEAD, MR. SAFIRE?"

A Guide to Colorful Newswriting



THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

where you want to remain anonymous" — \$299.95).

Items for Your Career

in...Uh, Locksmithing: A range of lock-picking equipment, from a simple five-piece warded padlock-pick set (\$9.95) to the Superior Pick Set, which features 32 picks as well as tension tools and extractors (\$75). There is also a pick gun, which is guaranteed to open any tumbler lock in five seconds (\$59.95); a three-piece set designed specifically for Schlage Wafer locks (\$34.95); and a set of 20 padlock shim picks (\$39.95). For those with automotive interests, there is the Slim Jim car-door opener, made of hand-finished clock-spring steel (\$16); the Super Jim, which is wider, thicker and nickel-plated and offers faster opening of most domestic vehicles, but which is no more expensive; the Houdini Car Door Opener, which "works the same as your old Slim Jim, except it now folds neatly to fit in pocket or toolbox" (\$19.95); the Pro-Lok "Car Killer" kit ("This kit of tools will open over 135 automobiles, both domestic and foreign....The opening procedure for each vehicle is diagrammed and explained in the instruction manual" — \$39.95); and a 50-minute videocassette entitled *How I Steal Cars* (\$49.95). The catalog offers a Tubular Lock Pick ("as found on commercial vending machines, washers, dryers, etc." — \$129.95) and a nearly two-hour-long videocassette entitled *Breaking & Entering: A to Z* ("You will learn how to perform the entry methods, where to get the up-to-date, state-of-the-art equipment, and what kind of traces each method leaves. Perfect for police, detectives, locksmiths, security professionals or concerned citizens" — \$79.95).

Miscellaneous Items: The catalog offers several "brand new, larger 8 oz. size" ▶

E. D. Hirsch Jr. says Americans don't understand newspapers anymore and advocates a strict national culture standard so that we can all speak the same language. To be sure, a Milton-reading, Herodotus-toting populace is an admirable goal, but that could take months or even years to effect; in the meantime, isn't there something we can do to bring America back to the news pages?

Happily, an antidote has been discovered by reporters in the trenches struggling to avoid the tedious abstractions inherent in news: the pop metaphor du jour, good for almost every occasion.

BUSINESS

"Last week, *Twin Peaks* was all the rage. This week, marketers are rushing to cash in on a new peak — the superpower summit." — Stuart Elliot, *USA Today*, May 30, 1990

"[Allied Capital president David] Gladstone attributed the gold-rush climate to the erosion of the twin peaks of venture money usually available from the banks and the venture funds." — Stan Hinden, *The Washington Post*, August 20, 1990

SPORTS

"So far, the Suns would be better off trying to unravel the twists in *Twin Peaks* than figuring out how to put away the resilient Trail Blazers." — Peter May, *Boston Globe*, May 25, 1990

"[Monica] Seles, 16, became the youngest French Open champion in history this year. [Jennifer] Capriati, 14, became the youngest player to win a match at Wimbledon — twin peaks, so to speak." — Pat Calabria, *Newsday*, August 26, 1990

LITERATURE

"...Lisa Grunwald's piece on adultery in this month's *Esquire*. In my circle, [the piece] has become the *Twin Peaks* of magazine journalism. Not only does it steer clear of the elements one expects from a formulaic magazine article..." — M. G. Lord, *Newsday*, May 27, 1990

LAW

"Now that everyone has to wait at least until next fall to find out who killed Laura Palmer on *Twin Peaks*, here's a real-life

mystery to ponder: What's on those tapes they are playing in the first big trial in Chicago's highly publicized commodities fraud case?" — James Risen, *Los Angeles Times*, May 25, 1990

ART

"The 1986 [sculpture] 'The Flower Is Hidden' sets up poetic and rather threatening tremors, which, if this were TV's *Twin Peaks*, would also be rather hilarious." — Amei Wallach, *Newsday*, April 25, 1990

SOCIOLOGY

"[Cherokee medicine man Rolling Thunder] believes in dream analysis more devoutly than anyone except the FBI agent in *Twin Peaks*. He sees a future so dire he recommends the immediate evacuation of San Diego

and Los Angeles." — Anthony Perry, *Los Angeles Times*, May 25, 1990

"Maybe it comes from watching too many episodes of *Twin Peaks*, but it sometimes seems families are odd entities that appear normal and happy on the surface but underneath are filled with strange twists and turns." — Chris Heim, *Chicago Tribune*, May 25, 1990

CONSERVATION

"[Using long-life light bulbs,] I feel like a pioneer, too. From chagrin to delight has been a quick journey, like getting used to *Twin Peaks* on television. All of a sudden the regular old stuff is just not as interesting." — Richard Kahlenberg, *Los Angeles Times*, May 24, 1990

ENTERTAINMENT

"What could be more unreal, if not surreal, than Thursday's bizzaro [*sic*] *Twin Peaks* episode? Try Diane Sawyer noshing with this year's mystery-flavor pseudo-celeb, Marla Maples." — Matt Roush, *USA Today*, April 20, 1990

"[Not since] Schwarzenegger's *Stay Hungry* has there been such a dramatization of physical stress toward a single goal: muscle made to burgeon under the twin peaks of stamina and (supposed) beauty." — Kevin Kelly, *Boston Globe*, August 24, 1990 — David Shenk



ART IMITATES LIFE IMITATES ELVIS

BOMBAY SAPPHIRE. POUR SOMETHING PRICELESS.



Bombay® Sapphire™ Gin, 47% alc/vol (94 Proof), 100% grain neutral spirits. © 1989 Carillon Importers, Ltd., Teaneck, N.J.

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THE SPY LIST

THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

pouched rations. The enticing entrées, which are guaranteed not to be "overaged" and are promised to have an extra-long shelf life, include "Chicken/Rice, Spaghetti/Meat Sauce, Tuna/Noodles, Pork/Rice, Chicken A La King [and] Meat Balls/Rice" (best deal: 72 pouches for \$108). You can also buy a Survivor Radiation Detector (\$185), radiation-sickness medicine ("When you need it...you won't be able to get it" — 70-count pack, \$22.95) and the always-handly 40,000-pound M-59 Armored Personnel Carrier. The never-demilitarized vehicle goes 35 mph and features infrared driving lights (plus goggles) and an outside mount for a machine gun. "Call for an appointment to test drive," the catalog advises. List price: \$75,000.

YOUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK

As we teeter on the verge of another war, it's comforting to see how the government has fulfilled its obligations to those who participated in the last conflict. Recently we received the following announcement from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training of the U.S. Department of Labor:

"On the morning of Sunday, September 2, 1990 a team of highly decorated Vietnam veterans — included [sic] one blinded veteran — will be parachuting into the town of Humacao, Puerto Rico to begin their 1ST ANNUAL VIETNAM VETERANS PUERTO RICO PARATHON....

"The objective of this year's parathon will be to demonstrate the 'CAN DO' spirit of disabled and Vietnam veterans and to reduce their twenty-thirty [sic] percent unemployment rate in Puerto Rico by encouraging employers to hire them through the Puerto Rico Job Service...." ☛

bird abusers

flashers

Hanna-Barbera voices

illegitimate fathers

large men III

little men

people who have clashed with Sean Young

possible Watergate Deep Throats

private nicknames

professional widows

random list of well-known names

romantic partners of their managers

SPY outtakes

things in A. M. Rosenthal's bed

unconsummated marriages

SEPARATED AT BIRTH?



Liz Smith...



and Sam Kinison?



Pat Buckley...



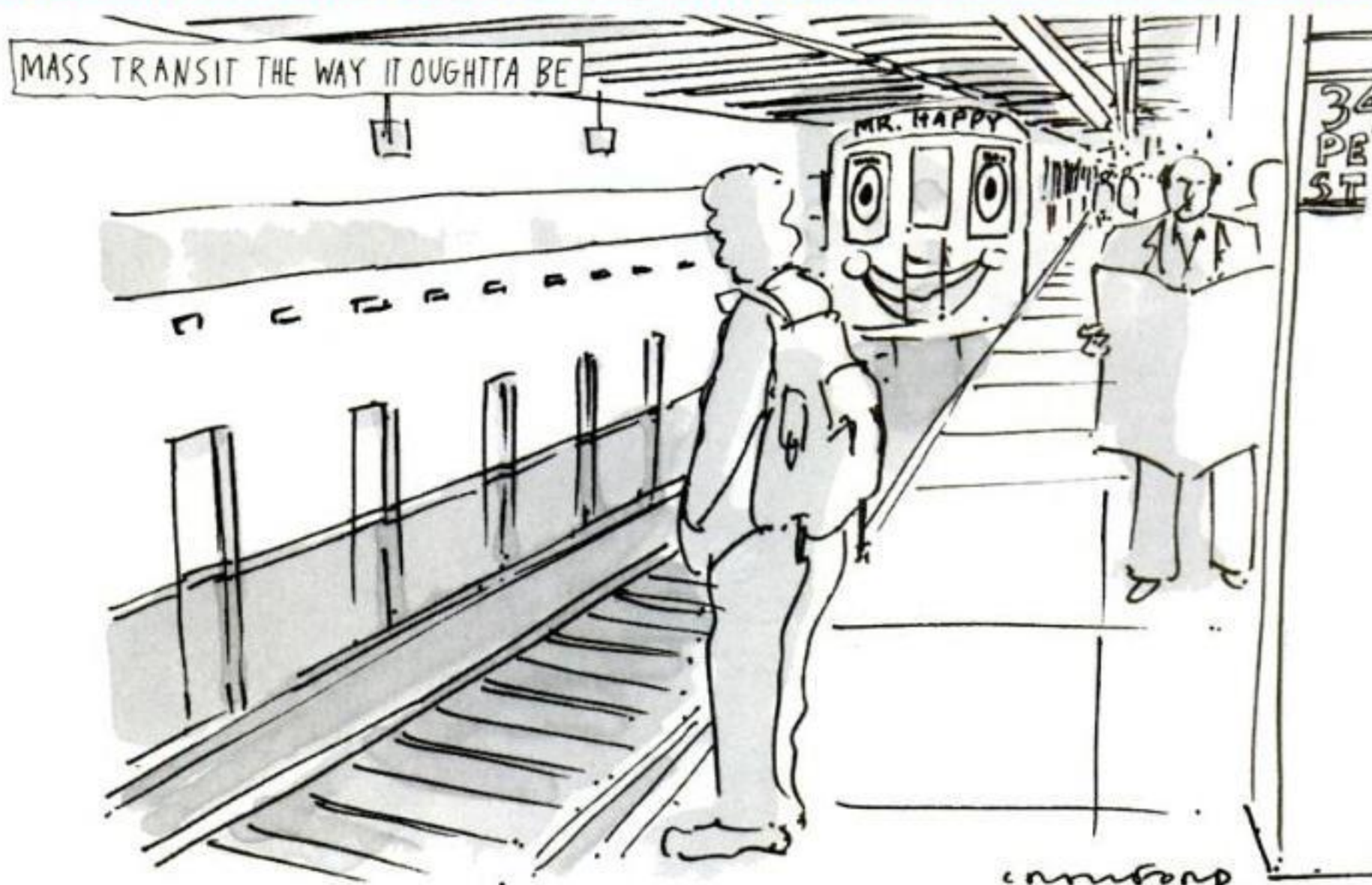
and Vanessa Redgrave?



Attorney General Dick Thornburgh...



and Nolan Ryan?



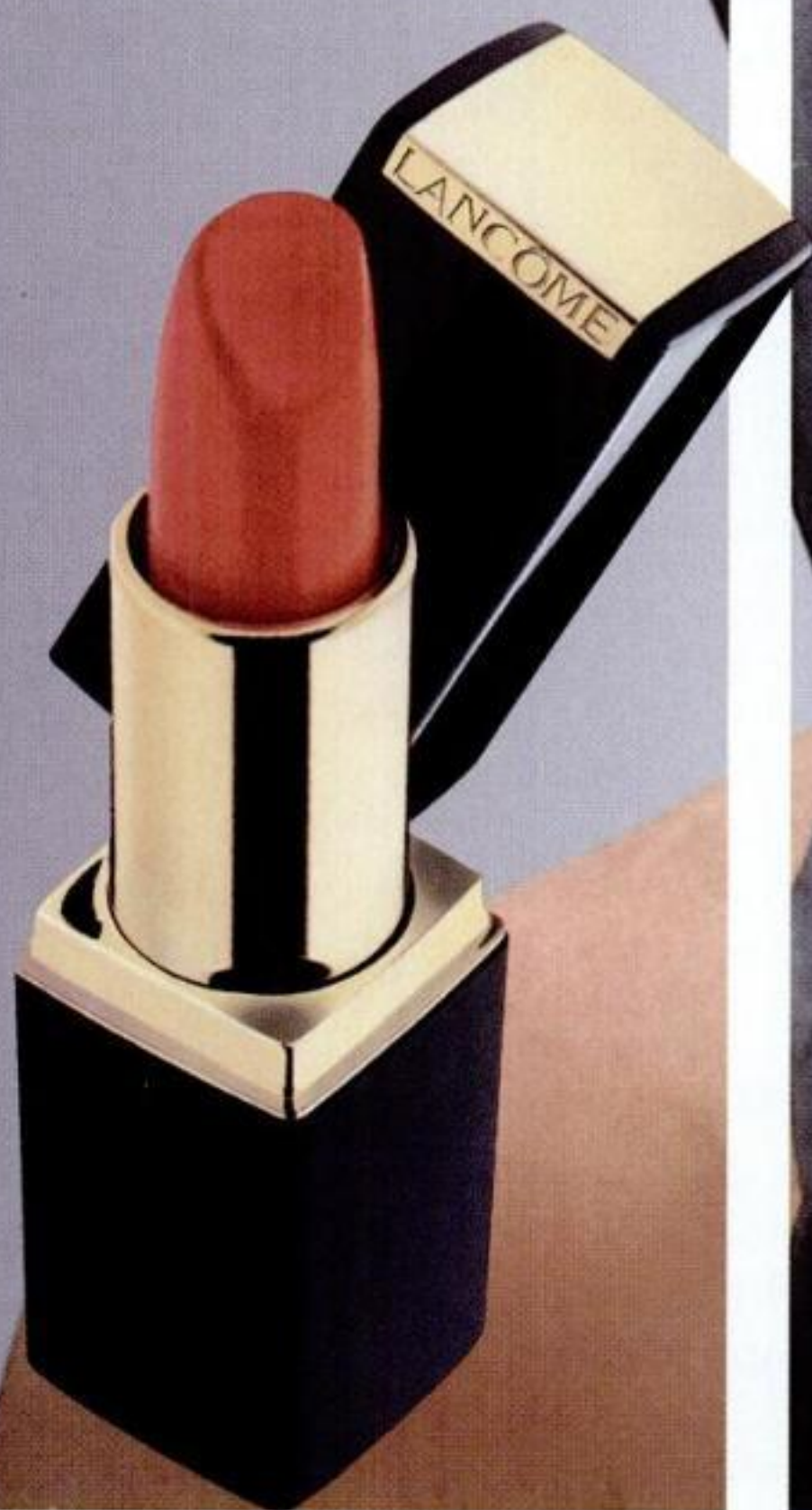
Introducing:
Luxurious, long lasting colour,
extreme comfort...

ROUGE SUPERBE

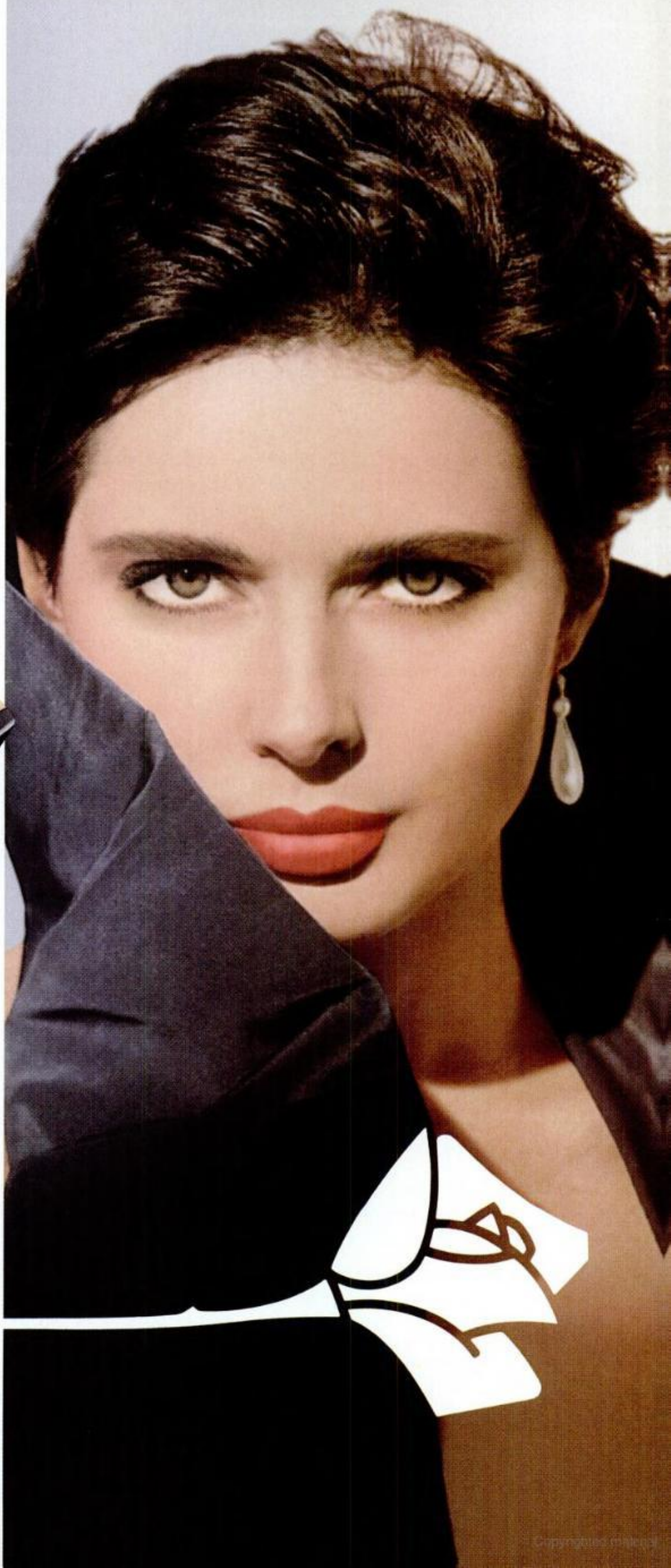
LASTING CREME LIPCOLOUR

- The answer to women who desire their lipcolour to be luxurious yet long lasting.
- Tests prove it wears up to 5 hours without fading or feathering.
- Comforting to the lips and protected with sunscreen.
- The panache of fashion forward Parisian colour.

ROUGE SUPERBE...the newest word in long lasting lipcolour.



LANCÔME
PARIS





THE NAME MAY GET YOU IN THE DOOR, BUT...

Presenting the SPY Celebrity Career Counseling Service



PART I: MARLA MAPLES, MOVIE STAR

"I've made a lot of satellites.... Marla can do any movie she wants now."
—Donald Trump, quoted in *Vanity Fair*

DAVID BROWN, PRODUCER (*Cocoon*): "I don't know of anyone, barring Eddie Murphy and a few other superstars, who can do any movie they want—unless, that is, she's willing to finance the movie. Or *he* is"

ELISA ROTHSTEIN, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT, ALLIANCE ENTERTAINMENT (*Iron Eagle II*): "I'd be about as willing to cast her as Donna Rice and Jessica Hahn. Golan and Globus might give her a part in some *Terminator*-rip-off movie where she got to expose her endowments, but let's face it: the woman's future is on the 900 numbers for lonely people"

GREG H. SIMS, PRESIDENT, ARROWHEAD ENTERTAINMENT (*Return to Horror High*): "The only time you would see that happen is with what we call stunt casting—a role where someone walks on for ten seconds for the publicity value"

MARTIN BREGMAN, PRODUCER (*Sea of Love*): "That's a lot of bullshit. Acting is not being a celebrity. You don't cast a person because they had an affair with somebody. Marla Maples is not someone you'd consider for any primary role, unless maybe you were doing an exploitation film. Then again, most kids—which most of the audience is—don't know who Marla Maples is. They most likely don't know who Donald Trump is either"

SAMUEL ARKOFF, PRESIDENT, ARKOFF INTERNATIONAL PICTURES (*Love at First Bite*): "Trump is as full of fecal matter as a Christmas goose, and he's 100 percent wrong. Marla Maples, simply because of her role as Trump's lover, wouldn't rate a second glance. Star casting—are you mad? It's absolute nonsense. I don't even think anybody in Las Vegas would hire her"

MICHAEL APOSTOLINA, HEAD OF CREATIVE AFFAIRS, MIRAMAX/MILLIMETER FILMS (*Scandal*): "Would we cast her in a Miramax film? It's highly unlikely. We're doing *The Pope Must Die*, and there's a tramp who has an affair with the pope before he becomes pope—maybe she would be good for that"

DAVIS GUGGENHEIM, COPRODUCER, OUTLAW PRODUCTIONS (*sex, lies and videotape*): "You could probably cast her in *Love Boat* if it was still going. Or *Police Academy 6*—she'd be perfect for that"

PAUL MASLANSKY, PRODUCER (*Police Academy* movies): "I wouldn't cast her [in a *Police Academy* movie] because of her connection to Mr. Trump. I would give her no special consideration"

ART LINSON, PRODUCER (*The Untouchables*): "If she's as good an actor as Trump, I'd certainly have to let her read"

Anyone interested in casting Marla Maples can contact her agent, Charles Melniker, at Melniker Management, (213) 550-7470.

PART II: RICHARD NIXON, RAPPER

"I have often thought that if there had been a good rap group around in those days, I might have chosen a career in music instead of politics." —Richard Nixon, on an audiotape available to visitors at the new Nixon library

Politics and entertainment—they're both publicity-dependent industries in which image is everything and it's never too late to stage a comeback. Showmen like Ronald Reagan and George Murphy have made it to Washington, so why not the other way around? Surely if former Nixon operatives like Diane Sawyer, Pat Buchanan, William Safire and Chuck Colson can all become entertainers of sorts, then the great unindicted co-conspirator himself can realize his dream? We asked some prominent hip-hopppers whether they'd welcome Nixon into their acts and what they'd suggest as his *nom de mike*.

RAKIM, OF ERIC B. & RAKIM: "You dead serious? Tell him we'd do a jam with him, word up. He can open up the show. You can get away with more things on the mike than as a politician." Suggested rap name: "Slick Rick"

TONE LÖC: "He'd probably have a better career in comedy." Suggested rap name: "Either MC Watergate or MC 'Peached"

L.L. COOL J: "I'd let Nixon tour with me if he can get me some of his lines into the White House so I can skim funds off the national deficit." Suggested rap name: "Watergate Love"

DADDY O, OF STETSASONIC: "Rap is so commercial now, Nixon could probably become a rapper, but Stetsasonic, that's out of the question. There would probably [be room] for him [in Stetsasonic] to play other things, like the tambourine." Suggested rap name: "MC Tricky Dick"

MASE (PLUG 3), OF DE LA SOUL: "If he wants to tour with us, he could be the opening act and we'll give him 15 minutes. He should go to Brooklyn and hang out with some of the brothers and get some rhythm, *then* pursue a rap career." Suggested rap name: "Richard the Ruler"

D.M.C., OF RUN-D.M.C.: "He'll never give up the Watergate tapes, and that could be a really good rap story." Suggested rap name: "Tricky Dicky"

KID, OF KID 'N PLAY: "I see him as a solo rapper, and he'd probably have, like, two dancers.... They'd probably be dressed in some intelligence uniforms, some Watergate break-in uniforms. No, I know what it is, he'd have two male dancers: one would be G. Gordon Liddy, and the other one would be someone like John Dean or John Mitchell. He's good at cutting, particularly tape. He could sample voices off the 18½ minutes that's missing." Suggested rap name: "Definitely MC Tricky Dick"

—Josh Gillette

GRABBING THEM BY THE SHORT HAIRS






An Exclusive Prank in Tonsorial Integrity

Some people may have grouched years ago when barbers first put on posh accents and started calling themselves stylists, but in general people continued to need haircuts. After watching the parade of cuts that emerge from salons, however, one can't help but wonder if there isn't some limit to the imaginations of these deeply creative hair



Lansky: Before

masters (and, perforce, some limit to their fees). DOUG LANSKY, a well-shorn man, visited five of Manhattan's leading salons in the space of three days and offered the same complaint and instruction. "I hate my hairstyle," he said to five different stylists. "I'd like a new look." None of the stylists, as you shall see, simply left his head alone.

Stylist	Consultation	Treatment	Cost	Lansky: After
Philippe, of Pierre Michel Coiffeur at The Plaza	"[Your hair] needs to be <i>relaxed</i> so it can have <i>movement</i> ," Philippe concluded after an examination	Philippe applied an Elmer's Glue-like substance and let it harden before washing it out. He then cut the hair, removing as much as half an inch in some places, before applying "polisher" to produce "the wet look"	\$57, including a \$5 tip	
Hiroshi, of SUGA in the Galleria on East 57th Street	Hiroshi suggested that Lansky avoid gels, because "the wet look is too wild for you." He said that if he were Lansky, he would "wear a baseball cap." His assistant described the current cut as "very amateurish"	He took no more than ten snips from the front and said that Lansky "shouldn't touch it for two months"	No charge	
Celine, of Bruno Dessange on Madison Avenue	"Your hair is very short," she said	Favoring the "spiked-up look," she applied gel and did some styling	No charge	
Joel, of Kenneth at Eva of New York in the Helmsley Palace	He observed that the hair was "very short" and that there wasn't much he could do	Joel took four to seven snips off the front, applied a buzzer to the neck to straighten out the hairline and give it a "stronger look," and then put on some gel	No charge	
Eiji, of John Sahag on East 53rd Street	Eiji decided to give Lansky a shampoo while, as the barber put it, "I think about what I'm going to do." The receptionist whispered, "If anyone can help you, [Eiji] can." Eiji finally concluded that he would give the hair a "less-rounded look"	For 45 minutes Eiji snipped microhairs (no longer than one-eighth of an inch) off the sides and top of Lansky's head; he then applied "molding mud"	\$57.50, including tip (the usual fee is \$120, but Lansky got a special "short-hair discount")	

NOVEMBER DATEBOOK

Enchanting and
Alarming Events
Upcoming

1 The American Place Theatre on West 46th Street presents *I Stand Before You Naked*, Joyce Carol Oates's new play about "the penetrating revelations of contemporary women." A night not to be missed by fans of shrill, minimalist Off-Broadway productions.
3 Topol, who actually lists his occupation as "Tevye" on his tax returns, begins a 12-week revival of *Fiddler on the Roof* at the

Gershwin Theatre.

4 The Educational Testing Service administers the Scholastic Aptitude Test. Thousands of young lives are irrevocably ruined.

4 New York City Marathon. Dean & DeLuca restocks its pasta shelves following last night's onslaught of stringy, overearnest young professionals intent on "carbo-loading."

6 Election Day, and the end of Pierre

Rinfret's erratic but entertaining presence in the news.

13 The Holland Tunnel celebrates its 63rd year in operation. And as every Jersey

teenager knows, it's *still* the quickest way to reach Canal Street and the tri-state area's finest selection of stolen stereo equipment.

15 The 1990 Beaujolais Nouveau arrives from France. Dean & DeLuca restocks its cheese



shelves following last night's onslaught of stringy, overearnest young professionals intent on having something to nibble on between sips of that fabulous new Georges Dubouef.

16 The Salvation Army deploys its squadron of fake Santas. A Talk of the Town piece in *The New Yorker* extols "the familiar bah-DING, bah-DING of the street-corner samaritan's bell" and laments the dying craft of a kindly toboggan-maker who lives in

Bearsville, New York.

22 Thanksgiving. Dean & DeLuca restocks its containers of couscous and bulgur wheat following last night's onslaught of stringy, overearnest young professionals intent on trying something a little healthier than stuffing this year.

23 Macy's Santaland and Puppet Theater open for the season. Store employees brace themselves for a torturous month's worth of piped-in easy-listening versions of "Little Drummer Boy." ▶



Walter Monheit's BLURB-O-MAT

Capsule Movie Reviews by Walter "Dateline: The Copa" Monheit™, the Movie Publicist's Friend

[Editors' note: Walter Monheit™ is currently under investigation for alleged ethical improprieties pertaining to last month's "Special Product-Placement Edition" of Blurb-o-Mat. SPY's internal-affairs division is expected to hand down a ruling on the so-called Monheit Plugola Scandal in late November.]

MERMAIDS, starring Cher, Bob Hoskins, Winona Ryder (Orion) ○○○○

Walter Monheit says, "Makes *Splash* look like burial at sea! Cher's *fantastic*, and Winona—oooof!—she can bait my hook anytime! Glub, glub!"

MR. AND MRS. BRIDGE, starring Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward (Miramax) ○○○○

Walter Monheit says, "Joanne's *Miss Daisy*! Paul's *Golden Pond*! The Tappan Zee can't offer a view as swell as these Bridges!"

THE AMBULANCE, starring Eric Roberts, James Earl Jones (Epic/Triumph) ○○○○

Walter Monheit says, "Pull over to the shoulder, Julia! E.M.S. stands for Eric's Move to Stardom, and big brother's running red lights to get there!"

CONVICTS, starring Robert Duvall, James Earl Jones (M.C.E.G.) ○○○○

Walter Monheit says, "Bobby, Jim, out of yo' stripes and into yo' civvies—Oscar's postin' bail!"

What the monocles mean: ○○○○ — excellent; ○○○○○ — indisputably a classic

THE ONE-MINUTE REVIEWER

Some Recent Books We Stopped Reading
After the First Line or Two

"When I slid in my baby slime between my supine mother's legs, I did not comprehend the expressions of her accompanying friends, did not understand that one was a crone, and two were hags."

— *Black Body*, by H. C. Turk (Villard)

"People fucking in airplanes. The pope shot in slow motion. The difference between color and black-and-white television. Curious things like these make me wonder. I love people but they scare me."

— *A Genuine Monster*, by David Zielinski (Atlantic Monthly Press)

"She could destroy him. The knowledge of her power was like white heat in Riva Staulet's brain...."

— *Love and Smoke*, by Jennifer Blake (Ballantine Books)
— Howard Kaplan

In 1799, the brothers Rusty and Dusty Nail
had a difference of opinion over who actually invented
the new drink with Drambuie and scotch.
Guess who won?



Legend has it that the Rusty Nail inspired brotherly hate. But that was some time ago. How long has it been since you've experienced a Rusty Nail, that legendary cocktail that raises ordinary scotch to mythic proportions? Of course, Drambuie is also pretty spectacular as a solo. It's the one drink that simply has no twin. Drambuie. Scottish in origin, distinctive in taste, unchanged since 1745.

Drambuie. The stuff legends are made of.

Liqueur, 40% Alc/Vol. © W.A. Taylor & Co., Miami, FL 1989

THE INDUSTRY



David



Steve

THE OLD
BUZZWORDS
GO INTO
TURNAROUND;
HOLLYWOOD
BABBLES ON

infusion of new, ever-more-oblique catchphrases. Old buzzwords are relegated to the airless wood-paneled offices of small-timers and industry washouts—witness the declining cachet of the seventies-vintage *Let's take a meeting*—and a slew of new tropes take over, lending their users an up-to-the-minute, I've-just-lunched-with-Kiefer-and-Julia air. Among the greatest hits of the eighties were *D-girls* (executive assistants who were good with story—the *D* stands for development), the *arc of the story* (shorthand for something called plot), the *paradigm* (another plot substitute, used by people who took Robert McKee's script course) and, of course, the ubiquitous *high-concept*, referring to any movie idea that could be pitched (described) in less than a sentence.

Alas, even these words have become mildewed oldies, and in the interest of full disclosure, I shall take a leaf from William Safire and present my own tutorial on the latest entries in the Hollywood lexicon—not that anyone out here reads, or in all likelihood has even heard of, William Safire.

Let's fly some glass and its corollary, *It's a flying-glass script*: the lexicographical heirs of Sam Peckinpah's 1960s catchphrase *brains on the wall*. In the nineties, of course, the highest box office tallies are generated from those films in which Bruce Willis, Arnold Schwarzenegger and their nemeses shoot at and burst through windows—hence the term *flying glass*.

Tracking surveys: all the rage among anxious executives; these are the equivalent of exit polls in elections—opening-

The New Lingo: Every couple of years, Hollywood revivifies its maddeningly oblique insider's lingo with an

weekend audiences are polled after seeing a film, and the results of these polls supposedly determine how well a picture will do in the weeks following. Marketing executives are particularly indebted to tracking surveys, which dictate the content and target audience of the film's television advertising—in other words, whether to market the film to 12- or to 16-year-olds. But the sexiness of the phrase itself lies in the way it enables one to trump people who consider themselves particularly “inside” because they've heard the weekend box office grosses on Sunday night or Monday morning. Tracking-survey figures, it turns out, are not hard to come by—so when somebody brags at Sunday dinner that “*Pump Up the Volume* did \$5,900 a theater this weekend,” the truly connected can top that by saying, “Yes, but according to the tracking surveys, it's weak among teenage girls and shouldn't do more than \$25 million.”

A no-brainer: the new, more accurate way of saying *high-concept*. An idea so simple—and often so stupid—that anyone can get it from a simple one-line description. This phrase is primarily in use at Ricardo Mestres's Hollywood Pictures, creators of *Arachnophobia* and *Taking Care of Business*.

An auction script: a flying-glass no-brainer written *on spec* (with no contract) so that studio executives can grasp its content in a second and spend millions to purchase it, only to realize belatedly that they've bought a script that's lacking in internal logic, scant on *story arc*—sorry, plot—and deficient in three-dimensional characters. In other words, Joe Eszterhas's *Basic Instinct*.

Lynch-like: Referring to the critically

embraced work of David Lynch. Anytime something doesn't make sense or is gratuitously bizarre, studio heads now nevertheless lap it up as being *Lynch-like*. Indeed, *Lynch-like* (or the more pseudo-scholarly *Lynchian*) is only the most recent promulgation of the idea of a *director's signature*, and it replaces *Spielberg-like*, *De Palma-like* and *Oliver Stone-like*, which in fact are the polite ways of saying *pretentious and overwrought*.

Steroid Boys: Sly, Arnold, Chuck Norris, et al.

Over and out: Bernie Brillstein (not appropriate for any art form higher than television); Dan Aykroyd (forget the Oscar nomination; left to his own devices, he has become the Revlon Man); Eddie Murphy (crushed by the weight of his own ego); Simpson and Bruckheimer (eighties relics whose *Days of Thunder* was something of a bust); Larry Kasdan (he had such promise); and the Brat Pack.

The New Powers: Joel Silver; Larry Brezner of Morra, Brezner & Steinberg Inc. (*Good Morning, Vietnam*); Rob Fried (affiliated with Columbia); Miramax Films (*Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!*); David Permut (*Dragnet*); Bruce Willis.

And Finally, This: Steve Bochco, the foulmouthed TV producer-genius behind the undeniably very good *L.A. Law*, has been squabbling with ABC over his First Amendment right to use the word *asshole* on *Cop Rock*. *First Amendment right?* Um, wrong, Steve. The First Amendment guarantees us all the right to free speech. Only a handful of us have the power to dictate an hour of prime-time programming, and that power doesn't derive from the Constitution.

See you Monday night at Mortons.

—Celia Brady

Anytime some-
thing doesn't
make sense or is
gratuitously
bizarre, studio
heads now lap it
up as being
Lynch-like

LET'S TALK SHOP WE'RE TALKING THE SALE OF THE CENTURY. EVERYONE WHO IS ANYONE IN THE WORLD OF FASHION IS REPRESENTED HERE. HERE AT THE 69TH ARMORY ON 26TH STREET AND LEXINGTON AVENUE. THREE DAYS OF MARATHON SHOPPING. STREETS OF SHOPS. DISCOUNTS LIKE YOU'VE NEVER SEEN. AND EVERY SINGLE PENNY OF THE PROCEEDS GOES TO THE NEW YORK CITY AIDS FUND. NOVEMBER 30 - DECEMBER 2. ADMISSION TICKETS AVAILABLE AT TICKETRON (212) 947-5850 LET THE BUYER BE THERE

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Connie



Eric

A CURRENT DESPAIR: WHY FACE TO FACE WAS PERHAPS DOOMED FROM THE START

In the glamorous world of infotainment, no more crucial relationship exists than that between star and executive producer. The executive producer crafts the star's image and responds sanely to his or her rants and whims. The star has the raw appeal, but the executive producer is essential to making the right use of it. When the two don't get along, a star-driven vehicle—such as a newsmagazine show—suffers. In fact, it begins to look a lot like *Face to Face With Connie Chung*.

Andy Lack, the executive producer of *Face to Face*, is a veteran CBS News producer and the creator of the not unwatchable *West 57th*. A tall, shambling fellow in his forties who is considered clever—by television standards—Lack has a somewhat feverish eye for the ladies and a TV-ish talent for turning on the charm. This charm has a limited shelf life, though: in an industry where making friends as one moves from production to production is essential for survival, several of Lack's former colleagues describe him with such glowing epithets as "arrogant" and "the Premier Jerk of the Universe." When he was still a mere segment producer in CBS's documentary unit and a superior suggested it was his turn to clean up the remains of a late-night office Chinese-food feast, Lack responded to this reasonable request by pitching the food cartons all over a colleague's office.

At *West 57th* Lack often asked colleagues to act in a more "sycophantic" (his word) manner toward him. He was seldom around the office, and as the show went into its final season last year he stopped turning up for work almost entirely. (Often he'd be out having lunch with

casting agents in his quest for actors to appear in a reenactment show and a docudrama about Hedda Nussbaum, both of which were scrubbed.) His incessant, all-purpose proclamation *This is prime-time television!*—meaning more style and less substance—proved so tiresome to producers and reporters that many left before *West 57th* was canceled.

Correspondent Jane Wallace's departure left Lack most visibly upset. It might have been a blessing, for the talented, tightly wound reporter had lately been refusing assignments and had, like her boss, practically stopped coming into the office altogether. Lack's dismay at Wallace's exit may have had something to do with the breakup of their extramarital friendship as well as with his acute sense that he was stuck alone on a rapidly sinking ship. When yet another reporter, Bob Sirott, appeared in Lack's office eight months after Wallace left and announced that he too would be leaving *West 57th*, it was too much for old Andy. He counted Sirott among his friends, and instead of calmly letting his chum go, he threw a fit, grabbing a bat (albeit a Wiffle Bat) and smashing objects on his desk while screaming in his best Cary-Grant-as-Walter-Burns voice, *You can't do this to me!*

As difficult as Lack can sometimes be, Connie "I Want a Child" Chung is no box of chocolates, either. When the \$1.5-million-a-year pseudostar came to CBS from NBC in 1989, there were more than a few smiles at Rockefeller Center. Among them was Bryant Gumbel's. Gumbel, after all, had led a drive several years earlier to have Chung banished from *Today* after an incident that occurred when she was substituting for Jane Pauley: Chung and Gumbel were

notified that *Today* was going to segue into a breaking news story and would have some extra airtime to fill. When Chung realized she'd have to banter with the remarkably adept Gumbel for ten minutes *without a script*, she fled the set, leaving him to soliloquize. Her dim intellect earned her the nickname "High Q, Low IQ" from NBC staffers.

Chung and Lack bicker often; she's been known to hurl cassettes at him. They don't battle over flash vs. substance, though; the two are more or less in agreement about the absolute virtues of glitz. Their fights are of the Hollywood backlot variety, between star and director. Not long ago Chung demanded that CBS build a closet in her office so that her fur coat wouldn't have to rest on a pedestrian door-mounted hanger. She also requested a special desk—she was afraid of bruising herself on the sharp corners of the standard CBS-issue model.

The mood at *Face to Face* is bleak at best. As Chung embarked on her aggressive procreation campaign and the show's weekly commitment was trimmed to a handful of specials, the staff knew it was only a matter of time before they fell victim to recently installed news president Eric "the Ax" Ober's budget cuts. Lack and Ober are old poker buddies, and they would seem to be of a single, post-Murrow-and-Cronkite mind. When children filmed for a *Saturday Night With Connie Chung* Mother's Day segment weren't cute or funny enough, Lack insisted child actors be hired in their stead. And one of Ober's greatest coups when he was head of network affiliates was getting the *CBS Evening News* moved up a half hour in order to accommodate *Wheel of Fortune* at 7:00 p.m.

—Laureen Hobbs

When Chung realized she'd have to banter with Gumbel for ten minutes without a script, she fled the set



HOUSE OF THE DAMNED

The Marvelous History of George Steinbrenner's Florida Hideaway

Last summer *Tampa Bay* magazine honored George Steinbrenner with its Best Citizenship Award. Despite his criminal record (he pleaded guilty to one count of obstructing an investigation and one count of conspiracy but was later pardoned by Ronald Reagan), his ouster by baseball commissioner Fay Vincent and the FBI's ongoing inquiry into reports that agents helped him gather information on gambler Howard Spira, Steinbrenner enjoys folk-hero status in Tampa for having brought big business (his company, American Ship Building) and big names (Donald Trump) to the sleepy town.

Steinbrenner and his wife, Joan, now live almost year-round in Tampa, in the redbrick neoclassic mansion he bought a few years ago. The Ionic-columned compound was the almost realized dream of Donald Regar, president of the Metropolitan Bank in Tampa, who in 1974 aimed to reproduce Thomas Jefferson's Monticello. Regar never got to live in his dream house, though: building costs exceeded his budget, and in 1977 he sold the less-than-half-built house to Frank Weaner, then chairman of the Palm State Bank of Florida. Weaner subsequently (in 1979) sold the house to Harold Holder, the president of American Agronomics Corporation, who added a pool, a tennis court and a library. Holder also gave the mansion a name even swankier than Monticello—La Touche d'Or ("the Touch of Gold"); it is unknown whether Steinbrenner has kept the name.

All three previous owners' lives took dramatic turns during

and after their time on the property. In 1982 Donald Regar was charged with 15 counts of conspiracy to use Metropolitan Bank loans to buy up Metropolitan stocks in an attempt to gain control of the bank from a stockholder; three years later he pleaded guilty to two counts of falsifying loan documents, and Metropolitan Bank went down as the biggest bank failure in Florida history.

The second owner, Frank Weaner, was accused in 1982 of laundering some \$100,000 in small bills for an Atlanta swindler named Leon Cohen, who had made most of the money by convincing a heroin dealer that he was a prosecutor on the take. Weaner, who has always denied any complicity with Cohen, was convicted of two misdemeanor charges of failing to file IRS-required reports of cash transactions of more than \$10,000 and was sentenced to six months in jail.

Well before he moved into La Touche d'Or, Harold Holder's company, the largest citrus grower in Florida, had already been investigated by the Securities and Exchange Commission; the company's previous owner had allegedly used illegal tactics to sell its orange groves, overstating investors' potential returns and paying accountants and investment advisers to recommend Agronomics properties to clients. In 1987 his company filed for bankruptcy, Holder and his wife divorced, and he sold the Touch of Gold. To a man named George Steinbrenner.

—Steve Garbarino

ASK DR. NICK

Timely Advice from an Actual Psychiatrist



Dear Dr. Nick,

I am worried about a friend. The amiable but not very bright son of a successful, well-known man, the lad has often managed to get along by trading on his dad's name. Lately the boy has got himself into some very serious trouble involving his participation in a \$500-billion business scandal. What's troubling is not that the boy was involved; his dad would not be judgmental, having been ankle-deep in a scandal or two himself. No, the odd part came after federal regulators offered to cancel their investigation of the boy's involvement in the scandal and spare his father further embarrassment if the lad would only promise not to do this again. Yet the boy refused, even though the scandal could ruin his father's career.

How do you explain this? By refusing the compromise deal, he ensured that the investigation would continue and that his father's rivals would have a potent cudgel to use against both parent and child. Despite the boy's troubles, he remains naively optimistic; he even thinks he may still become a United States senator. Is this one of those Oedipal conflicts? Do you think my friend needs professional help?

Dr. Nick replies:

*This scenario certainly suggests that there is more here than meets the eye. At first glance one might say that this youngster has **impaired judgment**. Also, we would not want to rule out an **antisocial personality disorder** in light of the likely criminality of his actions and the fact that his father has some history of behaving in a sociopathic fashion. However, we must look further; you mention the Oedipal situation, which may indeed be important here. Is an **unconscious wish to destroy his father**—his Oedipal rival—being expressed in this multimillion-dollar fashion? **Sadistic and masochistic impulses** are suggested by your story. Both may be contained in this seemingly irrational course of action, which we would call a **neurotic symptom**. If these suppositions are correct, then your friend might well benefit from psychotherapeutic intervention—if he thinks there is a problem, too.*

(Dr. Nick is the nom de plume of a practicing New York City psychiatrist who points out that he has never seen or spoken to the subject and that it's highly irresponsible of him to offer a diagnosis in a magazine. The subject, Dr. Nick notes, might be just fine.)

THE TIMES



Max



Pinch



Punch

The belt-tightening continues at the world's most important newspaper, where employee health benefits have been scaled back, merit raises all but eliminated and taxicab travel deemed a wasteful extravagance by Pinch Sulzberger, the paper's anxious publisher-in-waiting. Pinch's father, Punch, the actual publisher, has good-naturedly but firmly instructed his underlings to cut costs wherever possible. "New York City's sluggish economy continues to plague us," he explained in a staffwide memo earlier this year. "Clearly, as economic conditions worsen, we must be constantly vigilant and creative as we find new ways to do what we must at the lowest possible cost."

All of us, Punch probably meant to say, except the assistant managing editors. For Warren "No" Hoge, Al Siegal, John Lee and David Jones—men whose responsibilities keep them largely deskbound—have somehow managed to file four-figure expense-account vouchers every month with no punitive consequences. Indeed, during the lunch hour at stylish Orso on West 46th Street, one must hack through tables of senior *Times* editors to get to the back. Moreover, this past spring Hoge, Siegal, Lee and Jones, along with executive editor Max Frankel and managing editor Joseph Lelyveld, were all rewarded for their efforts with handsome bonuses.

Up on the tenth floor, the disparity between haves and have-nots is ever more apparent. After a lifetime of being a groveling Iago to his old master Abe Rosenthal, Arthur Gelb was rewarded with a postretirement sinecure as head of the New York Times Company Foundation, at a salary of \$300,000 per year. This while workmen down the hall slowly dis-

mantled the *Times*'s clip library—the legendary "morgue"—in order to make way for a more cost- and space-efficient computerized system. The morgue, which arranged all past *Times* stories by both subject and byline, had long been an invaluable resource to reporters such as the extraordinarily talented John Kifner and Robert D. McFadden Jr., the legendary rewrite man whose deft, late-breaking crime and disaster stories were often enriched by the ready availability of past *Times* clippings. They and other reporters relished being able to go upstairs to the morgue and spread out the relevant clips on a table; having the actual stories from old issues gave a reporter an immediate sense of how the *Times* had played a story, where it had been positioned in the paper. Furthermore, it instilled a sense of institution and continuity.

McFadden relied almost entirely on the morgue when, in the astounding days that shook the East German regime from power last fall, he was required to write a history of the Berlin Wall in two hours. Those old clips, like all the others, have since been buried—er, relocated—in a rat-infested leased storage facility beneath 1 Times Square. When McFadden and Kifner learned that the *Times*'s grand old library was to be dismantled, they protested to Lelyveld. He commiserated but said there was nothing he could do, even though impeccable, light-speed distillations like McFadden's will be impossible under the new system, which can require up to 40 minutes of sifting through electronic menus just to find the appropriate stories.

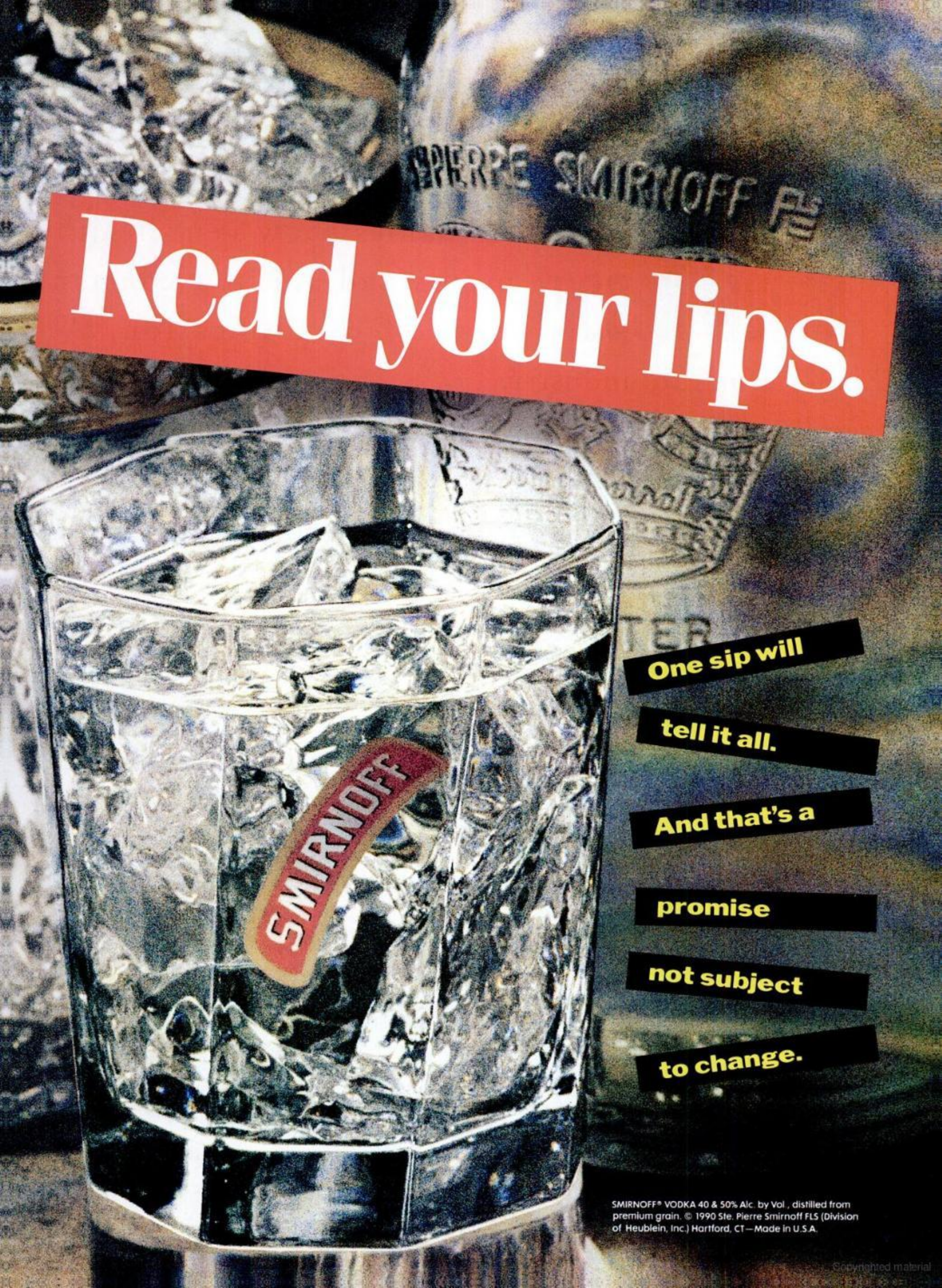
Happily, there is one *Times* reporter the circumstances of whose work reflect none of the paper's economic and jour-

nalistic decline. That's because she's Alessandra Stanley, the young Metro-section luminary who was lured from *Time*'s Washington bureau with some attendant commotion in D.C. press circles. Stanley has since become something of a pet of Frankel's; he recently meted out to her a \$250 publisher's award solely on the basis of her four-word characterization of Jesse Jackson as the "Zelig of modern politics." The phrase, denoting Jackson's proclivity for turning up at any major newsworthy event, offended some, but Frankel, who had just hired a platoon of black journalists, deemed it a fine writerly achievement.

Stanley's stock has also benefited from her well-received Reporter's Notebooks, the montages of reporters' short, telling bits that tend to be the most readable story in any given issue. One particularly memorable piece drolly examined George Bush's efforts to engage Mikhail Gorbachev in a game of horseshoes during the Soviet premier's last visit. It was just the sort of witty take on Bush's goofy, overly personal brand of diplomacy that might have been written by another talented *Times* reporter—a reporter named Maureen Dowd, who still happens to be the paper's White House correspondent and has been an on-again, off-again friend of Stanley's since their days together at *Time*. Washington bureau chief and hard-ass—manqué Howell Raines, recognizing

that Dowd is too valuable an asset to ruffle, knew that such glaring beat overlaps might occur and at the time of Stanley's arrival tried to preemptively placate his star. "I just hired Alessandra Stanley," he told Dowd, "but I don't want you to feel threatened." To which Dowd responded, "Don't kid yourself." —J. J. Hunsecker

During the lunch
hour at stylish
Orso, one must
hack through
tables of senior
Times editors to
get to the back



Read your lips.

One sip will

tell it all.

And that's a

promise




not subject

to change.

SMIRNOFF® VODKA 40 & 50% Alc. by Vol., distilled from premium grain. © 1990 Ste. Pierre Smirnoff FL5 (Division of Heublein, Inc.) Hartford, CT—Made in U.S.A.

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A Note on Our 1990 Organized-Crime Annual Report

Even in these recession-racked times there exists at least one field whose companies show very healthy profits and are in a constant state of diversification. Although a mature industry, *La Cosa Nostra*—"our thing," literally; "organized crime," colloquially—continues to thrive.  This highly competitive field is crowded with comers and goers, but in 1990 there is only one true *capo di tutti capi*. He is the so-called Dapper Don, John Gotti, boss of the Gambino family.  Gotti, like Michael Corleone, has often protested that he is no more sinister than any other hardworking businessman, and we have decided to take him at his word. Seeking to distill Gotti's far-flung operations into exactly the sort of comprehensive, self-flattering report the Gambino family might itself issue if it were incorporated and had middle-American stockholders it needed to impress, JOHN BRODIE actually traveled to Howard Beach and Ozone Park, combed through public records of mortgages, deeds, Department of Motor Vehicles registrations and Casino Control Commission findings, and conducted interviews with FBI agents, federal marshals, prosecutors, retired law-enforcement officials and even a onetime organized-crime operative who is now serving a triple life sentence for racketeering, extortion and, as he puts it, "acts involving murder."  In other words, although what you are about to read is parody, everything ostensibly factual is suggested by bona fide research and reporting.

The use of the news photo on the opposite page is not meant to suggest that the individuals pictured are in any way affiliated with organized crime.

We Are Family



The Gambino Group
1990 Annual Report





A Letter from the Chief Executive Officer

Friends:

When I surrendered to federal authorities in 1986 for what would ultimately be a seven-month trial, I quipped, "Ready for Freddy!" What I meant by that remark was: a legitimate businessman has nothing to fear from overzealous regulators. Try as federal prosecutors might to impugn me and our corporation, I stand before you today a free man, un'uomo di rispetto. Still, many who are suspicious of free enterprise continue to label the Gambino Group's aggressive market posture "criminal." But remember: this is America, where all are innocent until proved guilty.

The past decade was one of exceptional growth for our various enterprises, and it is only recently that persistent interference from certain government agencies has cut into our profit margin. However, these inhibiting market trends have not affected us alone. All of the "Big Five" in New York's family-run leisure-and-services industry--Bonanno and Sons, Colombo, Genovese Industries, Lucchese Associates and the Gambino Group--are experiencing a downturn. Yet I am proud to report that Gambino, having grossed more than \$500 million this past year, continues to control the biggest share of its markets.

As you will see when you flip through the pages of this, our first annual report, we have opened exciting and profitable new areas of business. At the same time, we've maintained our standard of leadership in the traditional lines that have made us the dynamic company our customers have been taught to depend on.

You will also notice that we haven't neglected the human side of the Gambino Group equation--because at Gambino, people really do make the difference. As do their inevitable frailties--natural human shortcomings that will continue to provide us with growth opportunities for profitable years to come!

From where I sit in our Ozone Park headquarters, the future looks bright indeed, and I know that each and every one of you in our Gambino Group family is as "Ready for Freddy" as I am.

Now don't make me look like a jerk or I'll have your fucking nuts. Just kidding.

Sincerely,

John Joseph Gotti
John Joseph Gotti
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

On our cover:

Ozone Park residents enjoy a Gambino Group good time at our annual Fourth of July corporate picnic. *Salute!*

1990 Financial Highlights

Net Sales\$500,000,000

Sales by Division

Food and Beverage\$100,000,000
Family Entertainment\$100,000,000
Construction\$100,000,000
Finance\$50,000,000

Fashion\$40,000,000
Import-Export\$40,000,000
Waste-Disposal Services\$30,000,000
Plumbing, Zippers and Miscellaneous...\$30,000,000
Maritime Insurance\$10,000,000

Operating Expenses

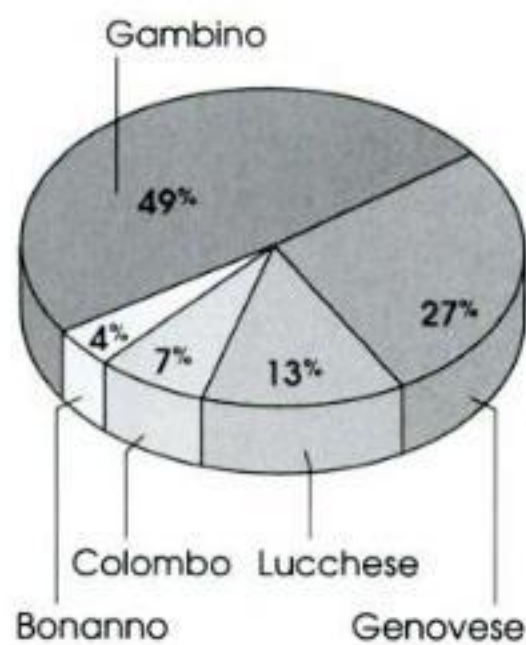
CEO's Gambling Debts\$1,000,000
Provision for Taxes\$0

(All figures are projections.)

The Gambino Group in Brief

We See Business Opportunities That Never Were and Say, "*Perché No?*" A Corporate History

A Gambino Group-Size
Piece of the Pie
Big Five Market Share



The Gambino Group traces its roots to clandestine leisure-and-services guilds that originated in Sicily during medieval times. When descendants of these humble tradesmen immigrated to America, they brought with them such old-world customs as *omerta*—the code of silence—and blood oaths for employees. The Gambino Group's corporate predecessor, Anastasia Limited Partners, wrote these useful management techniques into its charter in the early part of this century.

The firm grew steadily over the decades. But in many ways it remained an old-world-style operation until the watershed year of 1977, when an eager new plumbing salesman was hired fresh out of the government's Green Haven and Lewisburg facilities.

That young salesman's name? John Joseph Gotti.

Gotti and his new management team dedicated themselves to modernizing Gambino, opening a profitable new under-the-counter pharmaceuticals-distribution division. This bold move drew the scrutiny of Paul Castellano, who was then the company's CEO. But the times they were "a-changin,'" and Gotti was installed as CEO in 1985 after a brief management consultation on the sidewalk in front of a midtown Manhattan steak house. Thus began the exciting task of forging a corporate identity for the nineties and beyond.

With roughly 30 corporate officers, more than 500 employees and thousands more associates, the Gambino Group is today at the vanguard of the management evolution. Under our widely imitated Tribute Plan—similar profit-sharing programs have been instituted at corporations as diverse as Carvel and Mary Kay Cosmetics—each lower-level employee, as well as each freelancer, turns over a percentage of his earnings to his division president. They in turn pass along a share of their profits to more-senior officers, who in turn pass along part of their share to the CEO and a few others in top management. An employee turnover rate approaching zero—not including unexpected early retirements—is proof positive that the Gambino Group way works best for everyone concerned.



Operating-Unit Highlights

Look for the Union Label!
**Gambino Group Brand
Names Get Respect**



International Longshoremen's Association, Locals 1804-1, 1814



Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union, Locals 6, 100

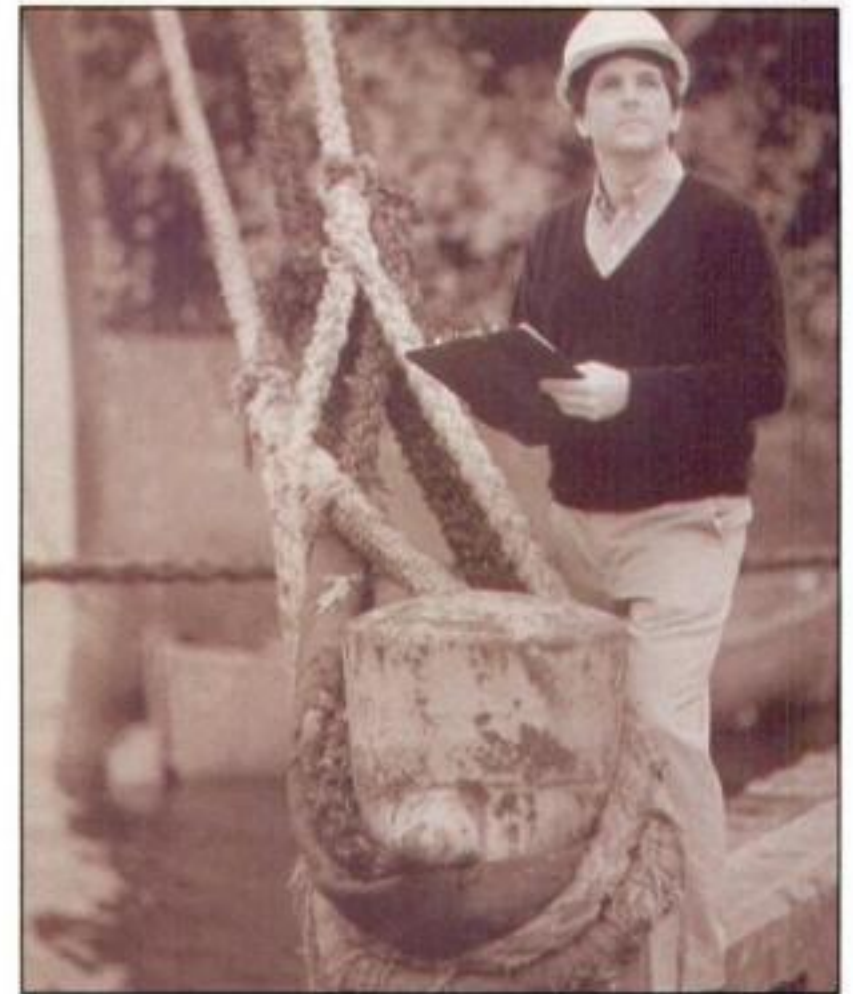


Architectural and Ornamental Ironworkers Union, Local 580*

At the Gambino Group, Time and Tide Wait for No Man **Maritime Insurance**

It's safe to say that wherever there are longshoremen, there will inevitably be accidents, work stoppages and high union wages. It's also safe to say that shipping firms will be eager to minimize these labor-related costs. In response, the Gambino Group (in a joint venture with Genovese Industries) established a unique brand of maritime insurance, one that became available when our officers acquired the Manhattan and Brooklyn locals of the International Longshoremen's Association.

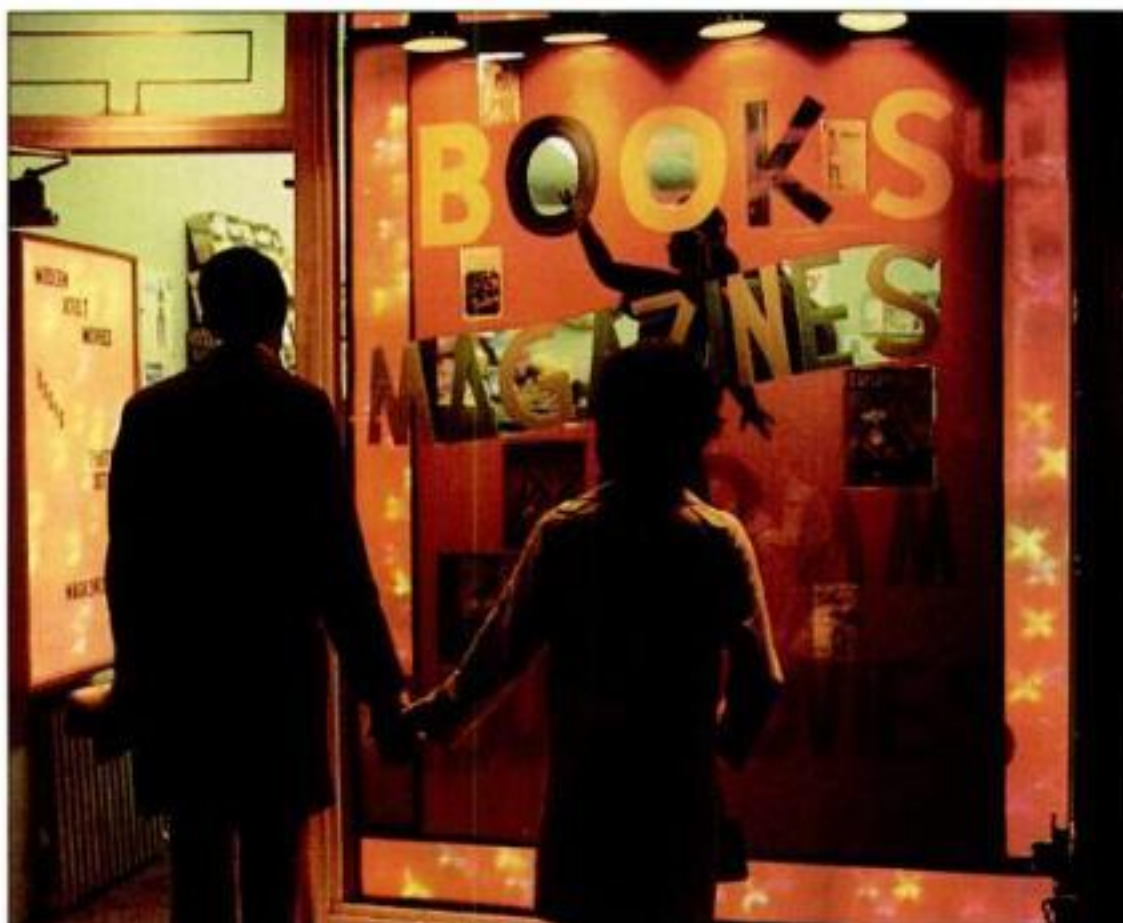
But there's another side to the story. With a multidimensional corporation like the Gambino Group, the "little guy" benefits, too. Instead of letting union pension funds stagnate in low-yield markets, Gambino Group officers can invest the funds in more-lucrative ventures right in the local community, such as high-interest employee loans. This way, employees' money works for them twice—Gambino Group synergy in action!



Anchors Aweigh for New Sources of Revenue **Family Entertainment**

Gambino officers oversaw a number of profitable entertainments this past year. Our line of instructional videos for mature audiences is prospering, and the Westies Group, a duly licensed subsidiary, contracts personnel services at Manhattan's successful theme park the *Intrepid* Sea-Air-Space Museum. Since this subsidiary acquired the unions that operate the attraction, Westies officers have been able to freely invest profits from the museum in other areas, like our Off-Off-Track-Betting services.

On a less upbeat note: A promising associate, Robert DiBernardo, took a permanent leave of absence four years ago when it was learned that he had drawn the interest of overzealous federal agents. Since that time, a standout entertainment venture for Gambino—limited-edition connoisseur photos of consenting minors—has had sluggish returns.



*Gambino Group rights to this brand name are currently being disputed in United States Eastern District Court



Gambino Group
Family Portrait:
Peter Gotti

Peter is the older brother of our CEO. Affectionately known as "Retard," Peter is preparing for his celebrated Eastern District lecture series, highlights of which will certainly include a detailed examination of how Local 580 of the Architectural and Ornamental Ironworkers Union paid Peter and his joint-venture partners at Lucchese Associates a \$2 consulting fee on each of 1-million windows the union installed in New York City Housing Authority properties.

Many Hands Make Light Work Construction

Concrete: there's not a lot you can build without it. And in Manhattan, there's not a lot of it you can get without the Gambino Group. Premium prices prove our pace-setting leadership in this key market.

Thanks to a joint venture with the rest of the Big Five, Gambino is in a position to offer unique benefits to New York-area builders. For instance, what do contractors receive for the 2 percent fee Gambino charges against a project's overall budget? Gambino Group "know-how," that's what! Union troubles get resolved *fast*. And instead of having to choose among numerous concrete firms bidding on a prospective job, builders are freed for more important tasks while Gambino Group consultants deal with pesky underbidders and suggest the two or three firms that Gambino knows will deliver the goods on time—market-dominating firms like Transit-Mix and Certified, two of our subsidiaries. Satisfied clients know that the Gambino Group's premium services are worth every penny, because those who take their business to bargain outfits invariably have problems with concrete nondelivery and no-show labor—one more example of Gambino Group synergy at work!



Our Price: Not Cheap
**Concrete Costs per
Cubic Yard, Manhattan
vs. Philadelphia**



Raise High the Landfill Waste-Disposal Services

Alas, not every star in the Gambino Group constellation can burn brightest. Corporate vice president James "Jimmy Brown" Failla reports that overzealous regulators shut down two of his waste-disposal division's more profitable ventures—Rosedale Carting and National-Stage Carting Company. A particularly vexing aspect of the forced divestiture of National-Stage Carting is that the Bay Ridge plant was an efficient place to house former employees.

Yet despite setbacks, this division brought in more than \$30 million last year. Rosedale distinguished itself thanks to an innovative, cost-effective process whereby used surgical gloves, catheters and hypodermic needles are reclassified as landfill and dumped in Staten Island's Arlington railroad yard, thereby avoiding expensive, unnecessary procedures associated with the disposal of so-called "medical waste."



Gambino Group
Family Portrait:
**Tony "the Roach"
Rampino**

Tony is one of the stars of our import-export sales division. More important, he displays an unfettered personal style that is unmistakably Gambino. When some overzealous members of the U.S. Attorney's office invited Tony in for a fact-finding session, he unzipped his fly and charmed the ladies and gentlemen of the press who were waiting for him in Foley Square. Here's betting that Tony's brand of wit goes over just as well with his current colleagues at Manhattan's Metropolitan Correctional Center.

Just Say Yes— to Long-term Consistent Earnings Import-Export

Over the years, the Gambino Group has maintained close ties with European pharmaceuticals cartels, ties that have proved profitable to leisure-and-services corporations in Sicily and New York City alike.

Despite constantly shifting consumer preferences, the Gambino Group has found the old standbys—non-addictive painkillers and cannabis derivatives—to be consistent earners. In the past, Alitalia Airlines aircraft delivered the raw materials to John F. Kennedy International Airport, and we responded by paying our Sicilian partners back either in cash or in topical anesthetics shipped up from our regional hub in Florida. New delivery arrangements are a closely held corporate secret, but rest assured that our distribution networks make certain the finished product gets to very loyal customers in only the most appropriate neighborhoods. It must be Gambino quality that keeps 'em coming back for more!



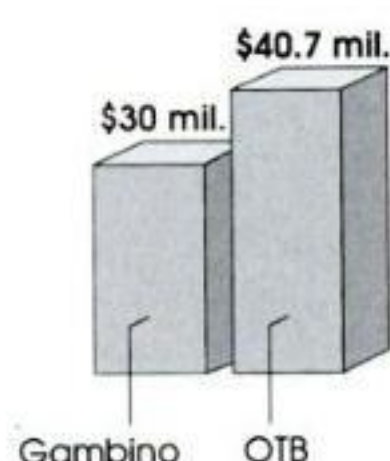
If You Can't Stand the Heat, Get Out of the Gambino Group's Kitchen Food and Beverage Services

Since Gambino works closely with Locals 6 and 100 of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union, restaurant owners who subscribe to our management-consulting service generally pay reduced wages and pension contributions. And that's not all. Gambino clients may also hire and fire as they please, unfettered by excessively bureaucratic union red tape. (Sadly, Gambino cannot yet take all the credit here, for many of these Manhattan businessmen are also advised by our competitors at Colombo.)

But when it comes to "putting meat on the table," the Gambino Group leads all rivals: thanks to distributors like our Quarex Industries and Dial Meat Purveyors subsidiaries, a big cut of the chicken and beef eaten in New York City passes through Gambino hands. Whether the brand name is Frank Perdue or Cookin' Good, chances are the bird is distributed by us. *Freshness* is our watchword: meat inspectors know the Gambino name and so accord our products the speedy official certification and respect they deserve.



Coming On Strong
**Gross Revenues,
Gambino Gaming
Services vs. OTB**



**When Your Bank Says No, the Gambino
Group Says, "Let's Talk"**
Finance

One of the Gambino Group's most consistent profit centers over the years has been its high-interest, high-yield loan division. While savings-and-loans are disappearing and commercial banks increasingly turn a deaf ear to those who need money the most, Gambino listens to the simple homeowner trying to make a mortgage payment, the small-business man with cash-flow troubles, the risk-taking "average Joe" who's not afraid to stake it all on the next roll of the dice.

Thanks to Gambino's elaborate network of loan officers, a simple "six for five" financing package has become the cornerstone of our grass-roots banking division. With this popular plan, every \$5 borrowed on a Monday is paid back with \$6 the following Monday. In another popular package, loans of \$1,000 are paid back in convenient weekly \$100 installments over 13 weeks. Our dedicated customer-service force ensures a very low delinquency rate. In fact, we think we can safely claim that there is no customer living who has defaulted on a significant Gambino Group loan.

**Where Hard Bargaining Never Goes
Out of Style**
Fashion

Despite the fact that our CEO is known in the media as the "Dapper Corporate Executive," the Gambino Group's generally rough-and-tumble image may at first glance seem out of step with the glamorous, sophisticated world of fashion. Guess again: our retail clothing division brought in "model" profits last year—pun intended! Corporate vice president Thomas Gambino, a son of former CEO Carlo Gambino, presides over our Consolidated Trucking subsidiary, which grossed approximately \$40 million last year serving America's top designers.

Consolidated and its many New York City affiliates have successfully convinced many on Fashion Avenue that the firm's dynamic, state-of-the-art transportation services are worth double the going rate for getting clothes to market. As truckers have realized that they are up against a superior contractor, Gambino-controlled trucks have become a practically ubiquitous sight on the streets of New York's Garment District.



Pay Stubs, Anyone?
Plumbing and Zippers

Our Arc Plumbing and Heating subsidiary continues to enjoy the special attention of CEO John Gotti. So does our Scorpio Enterprises, which is cornering the New York City wholesale zipper market faster than you can say "gainfully employed."

The Competitive Outlook



Gambino Group
Family Portrait:
Gene Gotti

Gene, younger brother of our CEO, was an outstanding president of our pharmaceuticals division and a valued personnel officer. At the beginning of this fiscal year, however, Gene embarked on a leave of absence at a federal wellness center in El Reno, Oklahoma. Everyone at Gambino will miss his sense of humor. Once, when FBI agents arrived at his home in Valley Stream, Gene, always the card, quipped, "Who is this Mr. Rico, anyway?"

They No Play-a the Game, They No Make-a the Rules **Effects of Overzealous Government Regulation**

The Gambino Group got off to a great competitive start this year when non-overzealous U.S. district judge Maryanne Trump Barry found rival Genovese Industries officers guilty of engaging in unfair competitive practices—practices that could have forced the involuntary retirement of our own CEO.

Down in Atlantic City, government interference actually helped the Gambino Group avoid a potentially messy entanglement. Through a junior vice president, Ernie Barbella, the firm had the opportunity to join forces with entertainer-businessman Merv Griffin in Resorts International. Obviously, our various consulting firms could have been of great use on the boardwalk. But considering the general gaming-industry recession in New Jersey—and Resorts' subsequent bankruptcy—Griffin no doubt did us a favor by informing the Casino Control Commission of our negotiations.

Still, overzealous regulation by and large presents only a down side. So when Gambino Group officers discovered that senior vice president Wilfred Johnson had leaked a number of critical corporate secrets to federal authorities, management decided that Johnson would be leaving the firm after more than 30 years of service. Many members of our team have fond memories of the man who wore the words *TRUE* and *LOVE* tattooed on his knuckles, and Willie's retirement gala was such an unqualified hit (*Ba-ba-ba-BING! Ba-ba-ba-BOOM!*) that law-enforcement officials dragged freelance party consultant Thomas "Tommy Karate" Pitera in for questioning afterward.

The Challenge from the East

Domestic and International Markets Profile

Foreign firms seem all too willing to take over the smaller and more problematic markets abandoned by Gambino and other Big Five firms. Jamaican "boutiques" now service many of our old pharmaceuticals-sales routes in Crown Heights, Flatbush and south Queens. Similarly, Colombian nationals now compete aggressively in the American import-export markets. Fortunately, the majority of their trade is in a single sector of the under-the-counter pharmaceuticals market.

The more serious threat to market dominance comes not from the Caribbean but from the Pacific Rim. In an effort to avoid an all-out trade war, the Gambino Group is trying to form joint ventures with certain Japanese firms—the so-called Yakuza. Like the Big Five, these cartels have quaint historical origins and hire corporate officers for life. In an effort to negotiate a ceiling on their inroads into our market share, Gambino works with Yakuza officers to run a number of host services for visiting Japanese businessmen.

Corporate Offices

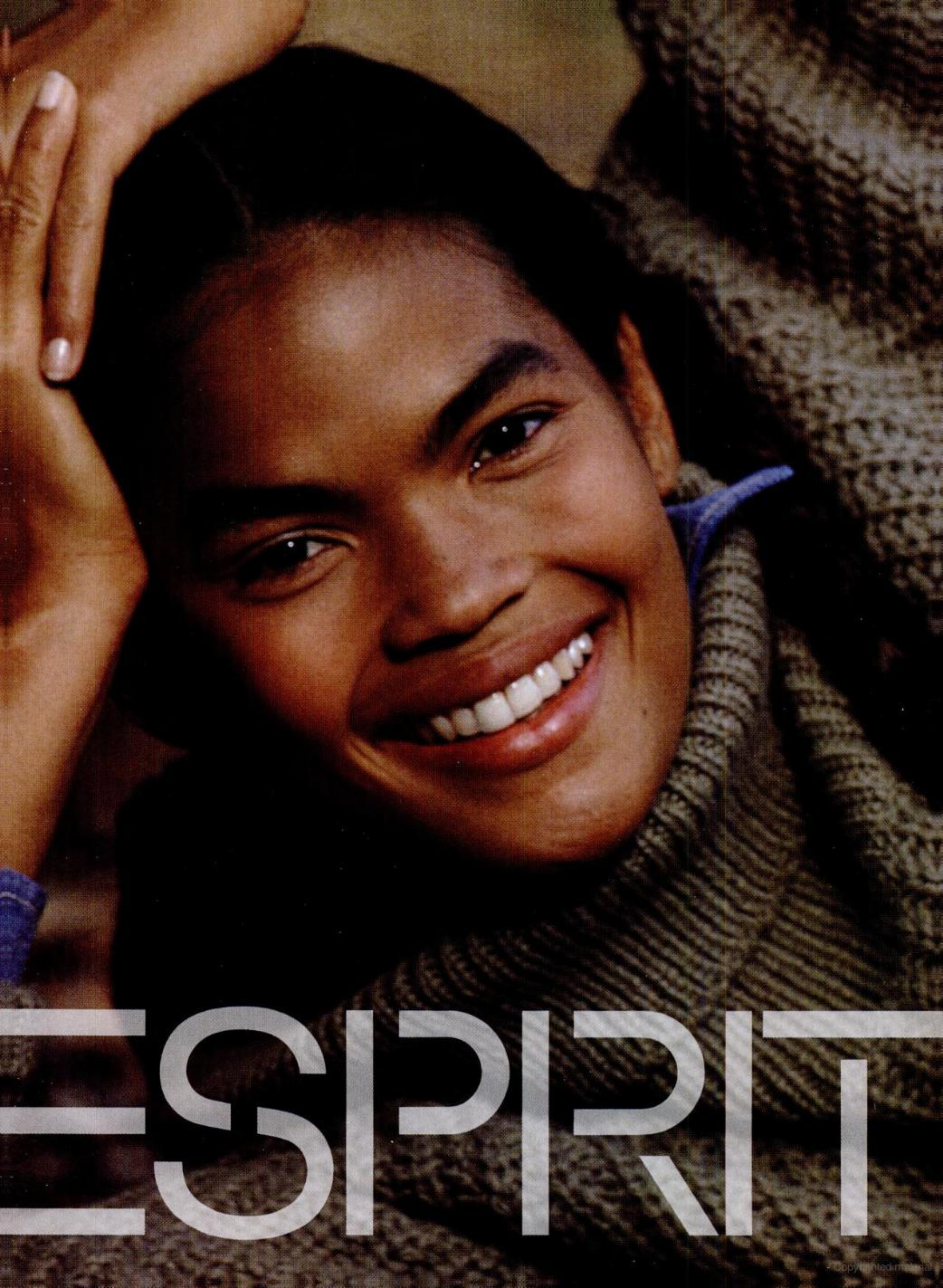


Corporate headquarters, Ozone Park



Manhattan office, Little Italy





ESPRIMO

Paul Smith

SHOOTS HIMSELF



Q Chief among the injustices of fashion photography—besides its implicit reminder that so few of us, even in the most flattering light, ever inspire professional photographic documentation—is that clothing designers are at the mercy of the people who shoot their clothing. Shouldn't the people who create a garment be the ones to portray this garment for the public? At least sometimes?

We think so.



And so we present this, the first in a semiregular series of designers' photographs of their own work. This month British fashion designer Paul Smith used a Hasselblad to shoot his suits. But first he had to dye 20 bolts of fabric in order to make these 20 suits. Then he had another suit made up from fabric from all 20 bolts. It was sold at auction, and the proceeds (£600) were donated to Greenpeace.

—Henry Alford

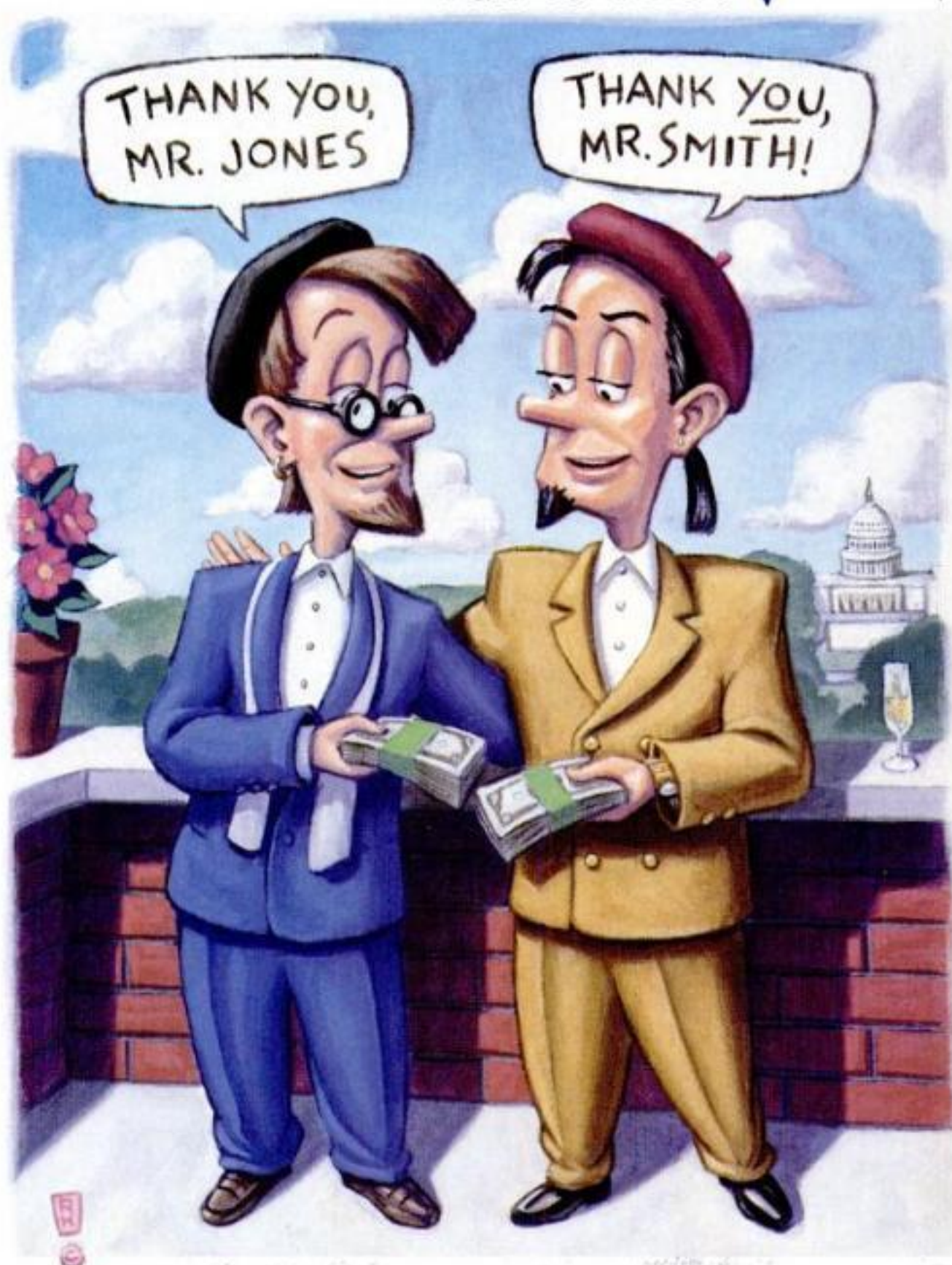
This is a hysterical distortion of what the NEA is all about. ➤



◀ **So is this.**



But is this? ▼



If Jesse Helms weren't a pandering prig blinded by pictures of urine and bullwhips, he might have accused the National Endowment for the Arts of fostering conflicts of interest and wasting federal money on successful artists who don't really need it. For once, Jesse Helms would have been right. *by Mark Lasswell*

IT WAS A GOOD SUMMER FOR NEW YORK PAINTER DONALD BAECHLER. WHEN THE KASMIN GALLERY IN SoHo showed his works on paper last June, eager buyers not only snapped up all eight pieces at prices ranging from \$8,000 to \$25,000, but they also spotted two Baechlers hanging in the office area and bought those as well. Meanwhile, at the Tony Shafrazi Gallery, which sells the 34-year-old artist's larger and pricier *faux-naïf* paintings, Baechler's *Onion Eater* hung in a nearly sold-out summer group show that included works by Kenny Scharf and the late Keith Haring. Having established a worldwide reputation over the past ten years with 27 solo exhibitions in galleries from Japan to Brazil to Sweden, Baechler couldn't be more secure professionally. And a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts—designed “to encourage the creative development of professional artists by enabling them to set aside time to pursue their work,” as an NEA guide describes the \$15,000 visual-arts fellowship Baechler won last fall—couldn't have been more superfluous.

“I paid about a quarter of my taxes with my NEA grant,” Baechler says.

For an artist under consideration by the NEA, where the panel that recommended Baechler's grant was well aware

HOW THE NEA really WORKS

of his credentials, already enjoying a successful, lucrative career isn't an impediment to having the shackles of worldly care further loosened by federal money; it's one of the criteria. In fact, that kind of bureaucratic illogic is a hallmark of the beleaguered endowment, which operates with a combination of coyness and arrogance that could result only from the marriage of government and the arts. But despite the recent controversy, despite all the ludicrous election-year rhetoric, despite the fact that *The New York Times's* very responsible culture desk this past summer trundled out nearly an article a day on the NEA, few outside the art world understand how the endowment really works or what, precisely, it does. As we shall see, given the agency's muddled sense of mission, its naive approach to conflicts of interest, its willful tossing of money at those who need it least and its disregard for the spirit of the congressional act that established it in 1965, the NEA is begging for criticism—only not the sort that has been heaped on it by right-wing moralists for the past 16 months.

Not that the recent controversy hasn't been gratifying to those who enjoy watching politicians at their most venal. And for sheer entertainment value, the art-porn issue has already beaten 40 years of anticommunism as a conservative fundraising tactic. Which isn't to say the other side hasn't had its moments. New York Shakespeare Festival director Joseph Papp, for instance, milked the controversy with his high-profile agonizing over whether to sign the NEA's anti-obscenity pledge or, as he eventually decided, to turn down a \$50,000 grant that would have represented less than one-half of 1 percent of the Shakespeare Festival's annual budget.

As with most national debates, the NEA controversy has disregarded the interesting questions and focused on issues that could be dispatched in the course of an elevator ride: *Of course* taxpayers have to subsidize programs they don't like; if not, when's the referendum on Quayle's salary? And yes, the NEA is *already* a ministry of culture; it's just that until recently, the agency encouraged a downtown sensibility in which photographs of bullwhip handles being used as

rectal probes are preferable to paintings of fuzzy kittens with big, sad eyes. But if the discussion hasn't risen much above right-wing yahoos yelling *Pervert!* at art-wing yahoos yelling *Censor!*, that doesn't mean the endowment isn't ripe for scrutiny.

THE NEA WAS CREATED WITH THE SIGNING OF THE National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965, but the agency's inconsequential budgets kept it from having much influence until newly elected president Richard Nixon appointed Nancy Hanks chairwoman in 1969. Formerly an aide to Nelson Rockefeller, Hanks held the job until 1977. Congress had appropriated \$8.2 million for the fiscal year when she took over; after eight years of wielding her relentless charm on Capitol Hill, Hanks had ratcheted the annual appropriation to \$94 million. Congress happily continued this ex-

alone, challenge grants have generated \$26 million in donations to the city's symphony, art museum, opera company and public-television station.

But when NEA money goes to individuals, the endowment opens itself to criticism on every front.

When it became clear in the late 1960s that the nascent agency was interested in funding individual artists even though the act that created it says nothing about giving grants to individuals and in fact directs the endowment never to become the majority sponsor of any project, Republicans in Congress briefly rebelled. But chairwoman Hanks promised that as an incoming Republican, she'd handle their concerns. She didn't, bowing instead to the then wishes of the National Council on the Arts, an NEA advisory group composed of private citizens appointed by the president. Since then, grants to individual artists have been enshrined as an agency tradition. (Last year \$8.7 million in fellowships, or 10 percent of the endowment's total budget for grants, was awarded through various programs to writers, jazz musicians, choreographers, museum professionals, classical musicians, painters, mimes, stage designers and others.) One result of the NEA's eagerness to be identified as the artists' rich uncle: the agency has had to spend the past year furiously explaining to a public that doesn't quite appreciate the distinction that the endowment didn't *commission* Andres Serrano to photograph a crucifix submerged in urine; it merely cofunded a museum show that happened to feature Serrano's *Piss Christ*.

Michael Straight, a former *New Republic* editor who was deputy chairman of the NEA from 1969 to 1978, doesn't think the distinction matters.

"This is a catastrophe that has been in the making for 25 years," he says. "The arts endowment was created to enrich the lives of Americans through the arts; it was not created to support artists."

Then again, some artists wouldn't exactly consider an NEA fellowship *support*. Donald Baechler isn't the only grantee whose tax-funded fellowship was recycled to the IRS this year. "In this case, I wrote a check to the IRS," a 1989 NEA painting-fellowship winner sheepishly admits of the use he found for the \$15,000 he got last fall. Many NEA grant winners have no doubt met the stated intent of the fellowships, gratefully fleeing jobs waiting tables or teaching Milton to stuporous undergraduates in order to devote themselves wholly to their work. For others, though, setting aside time to work is simply an alternative to promoting a book, planning a museum exhibition or acting in a big-budget movie. (Indeed, the roots of the current controversy go back to 1975, when Senator Jesse Helms noticed that Erica Jong had thanked the endowment for a \$5,000 grant on the acknowledgments page of her best-selling, sexually explicit novel *Fear of Flying*.)

More recently, a \$20,000 creative-writing fellowship in the fall of 1986 encouraged Tama Janowitz to take a break from promoting *Slaves of New York* and clear her desk to work on revising *A Cannibal in Manhattan*. A \$20,000 playwriting grant in 1987 allowed Wallace



Grants for grants' sake: "I paid about a quarter of my taxes with my NEA fellowship," says puckish, federally funded artist Donald Baechler.

pansive tradition, jacking the appropriation to \$171-million before pausing this year to consider whether the endowment should be funded at all.

When used for institutional support, the NEA's money is often admirably well spent: \$6 million awarded to dance companies last year, \$2.5 million to folk-arts organizations, \$1.4 million to literary publishers, \$6.4-million to orchestras, \$4.8 million for special museum exhibitions, \$7.7 million for nonprofit theater. The NEA challenge-grant program requires institutions to raise at least three dollars for every federal dollar; in Dallas

Shawn, who had a number of well-regarded plays under his belt, to consider turning a deaf ear to casting directors who had clogged his schedule with more than a dozen film roles in the previous seven years. In a burst of sadistic grantsmanship, the NEA awarded a \$20,000 creative-writing fellowship to Harold Brodkey in 1985, enabling the author, who had built an entire career on an unfinished novel, to think about setting aside just a little more time for perfecting his nearly-three-decades-old masterpiece, *A Party of Animals*.

The NEA's lust to assist distinguished artists extends even to ceramists. "I find crafts people whose sale of work amounts to approximately \$100,000 a year, ones who maintain two or three studios and houses on several continents," a disconsolate Warren MacKenzie wrote in *Ceramics Monthly* after surveying the rolls of NEA award winners three years ago. "These people are applying for and receiving support from the NEA sometimes two or three times in succession.... Let the established artists show a little restraint."

They do, they do, according to the twentieth-anniversary edition of the NEA's own quarterly magazine, *Artsreview*. "Most artists don't apply for grants after they no longer need the money," artist Chuck Close writes. "The unwritten rule of the art world is that you do not take grant money away from people who need it if you're living off your work."

We decided to double-check and see if this was so, venturing into the New York art world with the most recent list of NEA visual-arts-fellowship winners as our guide.

"Rafael's work always does well here," an eager assistant told us at the Nancy Hoffman Gallery. A 1989 NEA grant winner, Rafael Ferrer, actor José Ferrer's brother, does so well at the Hoffman Gallery that not long ago the Philadelphia-based painter built a second home in the Dominican Republic, where he now spends half of his time. Ferrer's colorful scenes of everyday life in the Caribbean sell for between \$8,800 and \$25,000 (artists usually get 50 percent of the sale price) and have afforded him a secure spot in the art world: his gallery bio lists 53 one-man shows and 127 group shows over the past 25 years, and his work is in 21 public collections. The \$15,000 he won last fall was his third NEA grant.

Sam Gilliam's show at the Barbara Fendrick Gallery last March "virtually sold out," we were informed as we contemplated one of the few three-dimensional, heavily painted canvas-and-aluminum pieces that hadn't moved at the gallery's \$25,000-\$45,000 asking prices. Not that Gilliam's work is hard to find. His commissions include pieces at the Atlanta International Airport Terminal, the McNamara Federal Building in Detroit, subway stations in Boston and Buffalo, and convention centers in San Francisco and Washington, D.C. Gilliam's large, sculptural paintings can be seen in less hectic surroundings when they're on display at the Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, at the Corcoran Gallery and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, at the Tate Gallery in London or at more than two dozen other museums and galleries around the

world. His record at the NEA is just as impressive. Before winning a \$15,000 visual-arts fellowship last year, Gilliam won NEA activities grants in 1973, 1974 and 1975, and NEA individual fellowships in 1967, 1973 and 1974.

Stopping by the Phyllis Kind Gallery in SoHo to inquire about another \$15,000 NEA grantee, we were disappointed to find not only that the gallery didn't have

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any of Jim Nutt's paintings on hand but also that there was a substantial list of buyers in New York waiting to spend \$30,000 for a painting by an artist who had become notorious in the 1960s as a member of the Hairy Who art group in Chicago. "He's very collectible," Kind's daughter assured us.

"It's not like I'm a media star," painter Rodney Ripps says on the phone from his home in the Berkshire hills when we ask about his NEA grant. "I do work, and I make a living, and that's about it. I deserve it. I'm not David Salle. I'm not out there really pounding the flesh or hustling." Indeed, Ripps doesn't sound greedy. But apparently he takes little solace in the knowledge that his work is widely collected, selling for between \$12,000 and \$18,000 at the Marisa Del Re Gallery on 57th Street. Even though Ripps isn't as impressed by the \$15,000 fellowship he won last fall as he was by the one he got in 1979 ("Now things cost so much—it's a nice sum, but it's not like winning megabucks"), he says he still values the approval of the peer panelists involved in the NEA selection process.

With only one NEA grant under his belt so far, Donald Baechler takes an even less sentimental view of the NEA. "My whole attitude about grants is, I don't give a shit, because when I needed them, [the NEA] didn't give me the money," he says. "Now that I don't need it, they're throwing money at me." Baechler says that in light of the NEA's potentially contradictory insistence that its individual grants are awarded solely on merit yet are also intended to help artists buy time to paint, he's not convinced the endowment knows what a fellowship is supposed to signify: "Is it actually to support work, or is it a reward for achievement?"

That very question surfaced during a peer-panel discussion when Robert Mapplethorpe applied for and won a visual-arts grant in 1984. A photographer on the panel

balked at the prospect of awarding money to one of the most successful members of his profession, but he was swayed by a panelist who pointed out that Mapplethorpe's income was irrelevant, that it was obvious he had applied because he wanted the validation of the photography community. (The recent controversy over his work was sparked by a later, museum-directed grant that was used to sponsor a Mapplethorpe retrospective.)

Asked about endowment grants to well-heeled artists, NEA spokesman Josh Dare said, "Obviously, there is no means testing with regard to grant applications, just as there is no means testing for subsidies from the government across the board, by farmers or by anybody else who does business with the government." Hardly a reassuring comparison. Nevertheless, Dare claims to "have the impression that the concentration of grants is on emerging artists and those who most need the money." In fact, the painting fellowships were divided last year into \$5,000 and \$15,000 amounts, with the more generous awards targeted for more established artists.

Obscure, penniless artists do win grants. But the fact that they're mixed in with successful names leaves the tens of thousands of losing applicants—and countless thousands more who never bother to apply—grumbling that the annual NEA winner lists are nothing but updated rosters of the well-known and well-connected, that the grants have evolved into obvious, Oscar-like tributes to success.

THE NEA'S FELLOWSHIPS ARE MADE ALL THE MORE questionable by the endowment's awkward selection process and by its ostrichlike attitude toward possible conflicts of interest. According to the NEA's literature, grants are made only after a rigorous review of appli-

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cations by a panel of artists and art-world professionals, whose recommendations are then reviewed by the presidentially appointed members of the National Council on the Arts; the NEA's chairman considers the council's advice and then makes a final decision.

This is all true, as far as it goes. However, endowment officials freely admit that the peer panels have historically dictated the NEA's grant-making and that the approval of the council and the chairman are pro forma (in the seven years before 1989, the chairman vetoed only 35 out of 33,700 grants). That was the case, anyway, until

last May, when the council members, aware that Jesse Helms might be looking over their shoulders, hesitated to sign off on a list of names and dollar amounts that was shoved in front of them. They meekly asked to see descriptions of exactly what works they were recommending. Thus began the tribulations of Karen Finley, a brilliant but indecorous performance artist whose grant, along with awards to three others, was ultimately canceled by John Frohnmayer, the endowment's current president and a former member of the Oregon Arts Commission. (Taking some of the sting out of the rejection for Finley—besides the fact that she had previously won NEA grants in 1984, '87 and '89—was the attendant publicity, which helped sell out the \$25 tickets for her performance this summer at the NEA-supported Serious Fun Festival at Lincoln Center; a second show was added. Holly Hughes, one of the other performance-art rejectees, had had the foresight to apply also for an NEA playwriting grant this year, using the same scripts with which she almost won the performance-art grant, and quietly won a \$15,000 award despite her public status as an NEA martyr.)

The selection process itself isn't nearly as rigorous for applicants as it is for peer panelists, who must cope with a blinding number of applications. For instance: a panel of five artists and one curator, selected primarily for their demographic correctness (a Californian and a New Yorker, three men and three women, etc.), reviewed applications for painting fellowships last year. The panelists spent five days working in Washington, D.C., reviewing 3,483 applications for scores of grants worth \$5,000 and \$15,000 apiece. In the first round of judging, the panel looked at all of the applications (ten slides seen five at a time) in two ten-hour days. Assuming that the panelists worked every minute of the two sessions, they spent no more than two seconds per slide while determining the artistic merit of 34,830 images. With each succeeding round, voting winnowed the field down until, in the last round, applicants getting favorable votes from four out of six panelists received grant recommendations. (The load is said to be lighter for panelists in other disciplines; an unsuccessful applicant for a 1990 choreography grant discovered that her work had been considered for a full *ten* seconds, judging from where the tape was on her returned videocassette.)

Meanwhile, the endowment—and the realities of the art world—throws temptation in the panelists' path at every stage of the process. This isn't to say that anyone actually exploits the panel system. But the suspicion that getting a grant is almost impossible without an "in" has become so pervasive in the art world that even the benighted NEA seems to be catching on. The endowment has begun participating in regional artists' workshops, explaining the panel process "to dispel some of the mystique," says Michael Faubion, assistant director of the visual-arts program.

It's the sort of mystique engendered when, say, the writer Geoffrey Wolff, who would go on to win a \$20,000 NEA fellowship in 1987, served on the literature panel

Attn. Senator Helms: Federally-Funded-Smut Alert

In Search of the Library of Congress's Secret Pornography Collection

THERE ARE MORE THAN 535 MILES OF SHELVES IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS. It is the world's largest, containing more than 26 million books, publications and incunabula on topics ranging from Albanian archaeology to Zambian zoology.

But is there anything dirty?

Contrary to popular belief, the Library of Congress does not keep a copy of every single work published in the United States. So our computer search of the library's allegedly complete database turned up no back issues of *Juggs* (the closest listing is *Jugoslavia*). Nor is *Honcho* represented. A request for *Playboy* struck pay dirt, sort of. The screen flashed this off-putting message: LOCATIONS,

SEE CATALOGS OR STAFF—no doubt intended to deter anyone with the gall to want to look at pictures of naked ladies in a library run by the U.S. Congress. Asking for *Hustler* produced an even greater deterrent—a bearded, bespectacled librarian leaning over our shoulders and inquiring damply, "May I help you?"

We chose to "see catalogs" and learned that the library does indeed house bound volumes of *Playboy* (AP2.P69), *Penthouse* (AP2.P413) and *Hustler* (AP2.H967). Preserved as well are a myriad of other *Playboy* titles, including *Playboy's Ribald Classics* (PN6071.L7P53). Curiously, although these publications are available at almost any American convenience store, in the Library of Congress they are stored in humidity- and temperature-controlled stacks under the watchful, off-limits-to-minors auspices of the Rare Book and Special Collections Division.

The reason is that once upon a time at the library there was a largely secret trove of works considered far too provocative for general consumption—the so-called Delta Collection, which included not only girly magazines but also works as disparate as *Fanny Hill*, *The Hygiene of Marriage*, *Ulysses* and *The Sistine Chapel*. The collection was officially "dispersed" in 1964, but most of it has remained together, effectively under wraps. Because it is a public library, the Library of Congress cannot withhold any of its volumes from interested patrons—but it can make them hard to get hold of. Decisions as to which of today's dirty books and magazines merit Rare Book preservation are made by a committee of librarians, based on whether the publication in question (1) is of "redeeming social and scholarly value"; (2) is "informative such that it will be of pertinent value"; (3) is "so widely known" by the general public as to merit inclusion; or (4) contains "pertinent technical information." No one at the library could explain why *Juggs* did not meet any of these criteria, or why *Hustler* did.

If you visit the library, we suggest that you take full advantage of the Rare Book and Special Collections Division. Why waste your time thumbing through the familiar pages of *The Joy of Sex* when you can ask a librarian to bring you the book bound in human skin or the blood-stained program for *Our American Cousin* found in the theater box where Lincoln was shot? Adults only, please. —Bill Oakley and Josh Weinstein



Hustler, yes; *Juggs*, no

that awarded his brother, writer Tobias Wolff, a \$20,000 grant in 1985. It's the sort of mystique attached to the panel that awarded painting fellowships last year, when a young artist named Amanda Farber won a \$5,000 award based on the recommendation of a panel that included her stepmother, Patricia Patterson. It's the sort of mystique that reached an apotheosis this spring, when the peer panel that recommended Karen Finley and Holly Hughes for their disputed grants included Jerry Hunt, a musician who has frequently collaborated with Finley, and Ellen Sebastian, a director who has worked with Hughes. But wait, it gets better: *the panel also recommended awards to Hunt and Sebastian.*

"I know that kind of thing, to somebody who doesn't understand how the system works, might appear to be kind of weird," admits NEA assistant director Faubion. An oddity in a government with a paranoid fondness for security checks and lie-detector tests, the NEA protects its integrity the old-fashioned way, simply by counting on the honesty of its panelists. Should they perceive a personal conflict of interest, panelists who feel they can't be objective are expected to leave the room until the discussion moves on to the next application. Which leaves the other panelists to decide whether they will put themselves in the position of having to tell their returning colleague, "Sorry, we just dinged your brother/your collaborator/your stepdaughter/you. Next slide."

"I don't see how a panel can function that way," says Mary Judge, associate secretary of the Guggenheim Foundation (which itself received flack last year when two young artists who were associated with the same gallery as panelist Robert Motherwell won grants). "Excusing yourself from considering a single application has to have some effect on the other jurors." Judge says that to be fair to everyone concerned in a competition, panelists with conflicts of interest simply ought to disqualify themselves altogether. One of Patricia Patterson's colleagues on last year's visual-arts panel, Patricia Gonzalez, disagrees, saying that even though she was aware that Patterson was the stepmother of the applicant they were reviewing ("I was sitting near her when she got up, so I remember knowing why—I'm pretty sure most people knew"), she thinks the panel process brought out the best in the panelists, who were "very concerned with being absolutely, scrupulously fair."

Still, those who know a few things about the gallery world might have been intrigued by a sudden surge of NEA-recognized artistic excellence concentrated last year at the Dietrich Jenny Gallery in San Diego. According to the 1989-90 edition of *Art in America's* annual guide to galleries, museums and artists, the list of artists with one-person shows scheduled at the Dietrich Jenny included NEA panelist Patricia Patterson as well as her husband (the respected local artist Manny Farber), her grant-winning stepdaughter and the winners of two other of last year's painting fellowships, Ernest Silva and Wick Alexander. No problem, says the NEA, whose blithe current stance is that it's not a conflict of interest for panelists to recommend grants for artists who show

at a gallery in which both granter and grantee share an interest. (Anyway, the NEA-blessed Dietrich Jenny has since folded.)

Michael Straight, the former NEA deputy chairman, says the panel system shouldn't be fiddled with; rather, where grants to individual artists are concerned, it should be tossed out. "When 900,000 people call themselves artists in the census, it's preposterous for the federal



"No more of that nonsense": Sister Rosalia Haberl, reluctant \$5,000 NEA grant winner, who has been honoring a vow of poverty since 1917

government to pick out 500 of them and say, 'These are the ones who deserve support.'" Straight would have the agency concentrate on supporting arts education and institutions and on creating an atmosphere in which the arts thrive. But he's not hopeful. "It's a hell of a lot more fun to look at a bunch of paintings or essays and say, 'Well, I like this one' or 'I don't like that' than it is to investigate [institutional problems like] the air-conditioning system at a museum of fine art. One, you're being a plumber; the other, you're playing God."

DESPITE A LOT OF DARK TALK ABOUT BANISHING THE NEA entirely and despite a lot of brave talk about reauthorizing it for another five years without restrictions (well, not *too* brave — President Bush lapsed into his usual craven absenteeism after taking a fleeting stand on the issue this spring), it was apparent by early fall that Congress would reauthorize the agency after grafting a few face-saving, discomfiting but ultimately pointless obscenity restrictions onto the bill. Nonprofit organizations will still be able to point to the endowment as a seal of approval when mining the far richer lode of support in the public sector (\$119 million in 1988 grants by the endowment prompted private contributions of \$1.3 billion), and Senator Helms and his colleagues on the right

will find some new horror to keep the troops boiling.

After Congress rolls over and goes back to sleep this month, maybe the endowment and its supporters will come out from behind the skirts of Sister Rosalia Haberl, who makes intricately patterned bobbin lace. Rattled by the constant harping about the NEA's association with the gay-bondage and renal iconography of Mapplethorpe and Serrano, NEA supporters last year cast about for an indisputably "nice" beneficiary of the agency's largess. They found Sister Rosalia, who had received a grant in 1988.

"The NEA has nourished an astonishing range of creativity," declared a *New York Times* editorial last May. "Small museums and great art institutions; hundreds of theater and dance companies across the country; a 92-year-old maker of bobbin lace in South [sic] Dakota... who might never have been heard from otherwise." The nonagenarian knitter was similarly cited in official NEA literature and in supportive editorials and pamphlets across the country. Nevertheless, conservative critics managed to find fault even with as innocuous a grant as this one. Sourpuss congressman Philip Crane grouched in a *Times* Op-Ed piece that "the Federal Government has more necessary and important things to fund than a bobbin lace maker."

Again, as with just about everything else relating to the NEA, the truth is far muddier than either side's rhetoric allows. It turns out that Sister Rosalia learned to make bobbin lace as a child in Bavaria. She now lives in Hankinson, North Dakota, at the St. Francis convent (the 100 nuns there represent about 10 percent of the town's population). Now 93, Sister Rosalia suffers from hearing loss, a general bashfulness and not much confidence in her English; she prefers to have her colleague Sister Mathilde speak for her on the telephone.

The spokesnun paints a bleak picture. Sister Rosalia was quietly enjoying the challenge of her retirement hobby, sometimes keeping up to 100 bobbins working at a time, when she was set upon by that bane of crafts people everywhere: the folklorist. Knowing a craft that needed honoring when he saw one, the folklorist scooped up the elderly nun, successfully nominated her for an award from the North Dakota Council on the Arts and "kind of promoted her," as Sister Mathilde diplomatically describes the campaign — which resulted in an onslaught of craft-show appearances, the attention of a local television crew and a backlog of hundreds of guilt-inducing orders for her intricate work. The folklorist, still not satisfied that his discovery had been sufficiently recognized, decided to take her national, successfully applying for a 1988 NEA-sponsored National Heritage Fellowship in her name and winning a \$5,000 prize for someone who had been honoring a vow of poverty since 1917.

And how did the fragile nun bear up under all the unsought money and attention? "To be honest, it made her tired," says Sister Mathilde. "She takes it all in great stride, but now she says, 'That's the end of it. No more of that nonsense.'" ☛



September 1988
LIFE-STYLE HELL! OUR SPECIAL LOS ANGELES ISSUE

"The sex, the spandex, the pastels, the car phones, the irony shortage and the general uncensored dudeosity that make Los Angeles a shrine to vapid fun."

May 1989

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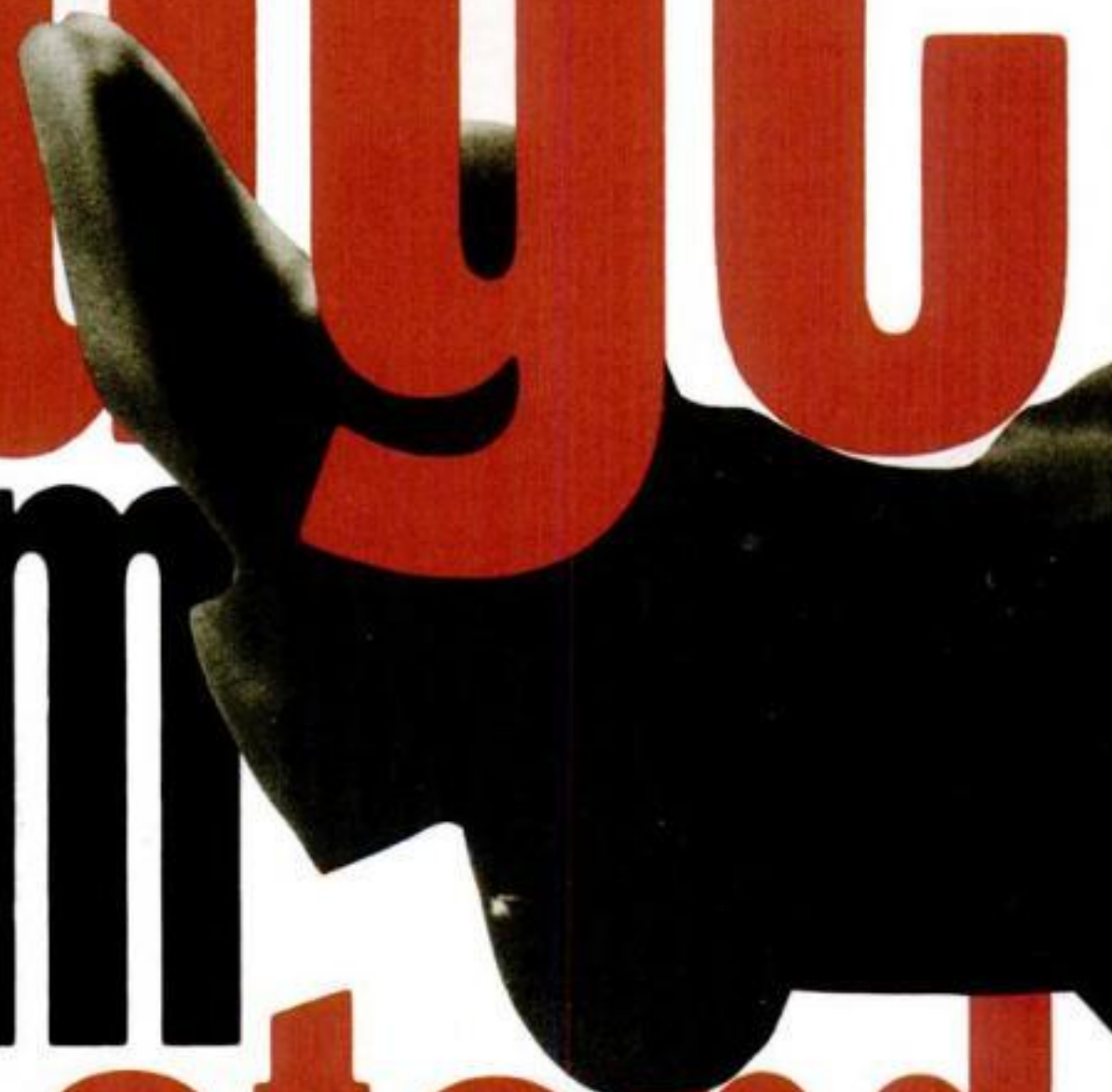
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Was it the 1990s that killed *Manhattan, inc.*, the best business magazine to come along in decades? Or was the culprit Clay Felker, the man of a thousand mastheads and precisely one great idea? From *Life* to the *New York Herald Tribune* to *New York*, from *Esquire* to the *Battery News* to the strange hybrid *M Inc.*, come along with us as we join the world's most famous editor on his

Wowza

to the Bottom of the Newsstand



AT FIRST IT SEEMED TO BE JUST ANOTHER WEEKNIGHT AT ELAINE'S. THE YEAR WAS 1987, AND THE USUAL crowd was out in force. Frank Rich was at a front table with a couple of friends. The actor John Paul Henry was reenacting an obscure Civil War battle for the TV producer David Black and a gathering of writers and editors two tables back. Elsewhere along the middle wall, screenwriters, novelists, actors and real estate speculators discussed, in minute detail, the week's events—not the ongoing Iran-contra hearings, but the large advances Andrew Wylie was getting for his writers. ☞ But then the door swung open and

by Rachel Urquhart



Felker, circa his mid-1970s *New York* heyday, holding a phone to his ear while lifestyle article ideas gestate in his head

a slightly paunchy, balding man stepped into the crowd. He was a familiar sight, an Elaine's regular. That night, though, there was something different about him. He stood tall in his Huntsman jacket, frayed Turnbull & Asser shirt and wide necktie, striding through the door with the renewed confidence of a former major leaguer back in the lineup again. As he surveyed the gathering before him with darting eyes, his look was charged, announcing to anyone who looked his way, *I'm back.*

And everyone looked his way.

"Clay! Congratulations!"

"Clay! Nice going!"

"Hey, Clay, great news!..."

It took Clay Felker, who had that day been named the new editor of *Manhattan, inc.*, 40 minutes to work his way to his table at the back of the room. Forty glorious minutes that had been a long time coming.

THESE DAYS ESPECIALLY, EVERYONE LOVES comeback stories — bruised, aging, once-triumphant actors, athletes, politicians, artists, financiers scratching and scrabbling away in an effort to make a *second* ascent. With each attempt the crowd of on-lookers gets smaller and the jeers louder when, as happens more often than not, the hero falls. And depending on the risks involved—the budget of the movie, the prominence of the election, the size of the attempted takeover—those descents can be spectacular, hurtling free-falls. That, of course, is one unspoken reason people love a prospective comeback: the distinct and titillating possibility that someone might fail. Again. And again. And then again.

In this way, Clay Felker—the 65-year-old son of a St. Louis sports editor—has been delighting the publishing community for more than a decade now. The man who created *New York* magazine, he is perhaps the most famous magazine editor ever, certainly the most celebrated of his day. And yet on that intoxicating 1987 evening at Elaine's, Felker hadn't been an active, *serious* force in journalism for almost ten years. He was, instead, a legend—that often dubious honor—and it was a testament to long-past achievements that New York's publishing world stirred when it was announced he would take over *Manhattan, inc.* There has always been about him, even in his grimmest days, a sense of possible magic, a perception that he might take something pedestrian and Felkerize it, the way he did the city magazine. *Manhattan, inc.*, moreover, was far from pedestrian; one of the most successful new magazines of the 1980s, it was helping to set new standards of quality and aggressiveness, much as Felker's *New York* had in the late 1960s and the 1970s. At the outset, Felker and *Manhattan, inc.* looked like a potentially winning match.

But then, so do most marriages.

Felker (who, despite repeated requests, did not respond to SPY's questions) began his career as an editor and writer at

Life and then *Esquire*—both vital publications in Felker's day. At the *New York Herald Tribune*, he helped edit Jock Whitney's popular and innovative Sunday magazine until the *Tribune* folded in 1967. Felker bought the rights to the magazine's name, *New York*, and relaunched it as a glossy freestanding

weekly. Over the next ten years, with the help of graphic designer Milton

Glaser and writers such as Tom Wolfe, Ken Auletta, Gael Greene, Peter Maas, Gail

Sheehy (now Felker's wife), Nora Ephron, Nicholas Pileggi and

many others, Felker created a graphic and editorial style that made magazine history.

As unlikely as it may seem to younger

readers who know only the *New York* of the eighties and nineties, Felker's *New York* was one of the liveliest and best magazines in the country. Along with Harold Hayes, his former boss at *Esquire*, Felker was one of the earliest

Power replay: devotion from *New York* to *Manhattan, inc.* (shown here with publisher Herb Lipsen) to *M Inc.*

champions of the New Journalism, of writers like Wolfe and Jimmy Breslin.

As his magazine grew during the seventies, Felker

successfully adapted to those times by pioneering "life-style" journalism (*New York* practically coined the word) and the sort of just-the-facts short-form stories—the *ten best this*, the *hottest that*—that have since informed virtually every publication in America. The very first issue offered Wolfe classifying New Yorkers by accent as either "Honks" or "Wonks,"

and Milton Glaser and Jerome Snyder's *Underground Gourmet* exploring an outdoor market in Spanish Harlem. Later issues asked and answered such once-pertinent questions as "Is Woody Allen Really Charlie Brown?" "Is the Money Moving South of Generation Gap?" and "25 Things You Can Live Without—but Why Should You?" For better or worse, the magazine defined its times.

The late sixties and early seventies were heady years for Felker. He fed off the social heat generated by his magazine, and the magazine in turn thrived on his energy. "Clay had passion," says Ellen Stern, who was at *New York* in its early days and is now a senior writer at *GQ*. "He had passion for the city and the people who did the stuff that interested him, and a real sensitivity for what was a story. He'd come back from a lunch or a party with little scraps of paper in his pocket, and he'd say, 'Go call this guy and find out about this,' or 'I heard that so-and-so did such and such—look into it.' Clay went, he did, he was out all the time. He knew the town."

In *New York*'s offices, on the fourth floor of an East 32nd Street walk-up, the magazine's staff shared a long and

As unlikely as it may seem to today's readers, *New York* under Felker was one of the liveliest magazines in the country



cluttered room and a dingy cold-water bathroom. "Sitting on that top floor," says Stern, "I remember you never knew who was going to come up the stairs. The door would open and everyone would look up. And it *was* Tom Wolfe in his white suit, or it *was* Jimmy Breslin, huffing and puffing as if he were going to have a heart attack from the four flights of stairs. Or it was Gael Greene or Gloria Steinem."

Felker's troubles started in 1976, when he began a period of expansion. In an effort to create something of a media empire, he founded *New West* (now *California* magazine), a West Coast clone of *New York* that was plagued by debt from its \$4 million start-up costs (way over the original budget). He had taken over control of *The Village Voice* in 1974, then tried to snazz it up *New York*-style and take it national—which had proved disastrous, both editorially and financially. Even *New York*, for all its vaunted success, was losing money after nine years of existence. The board of directors of New York Magazine Company, the parent company, of which Felker owned 10 percent, began to get restive. Felker approached Rupert Murdoch for help with the squabbling board members, but Murdoch was no white knight. He turned around and bought up their shares, thereby obtaining majority ownership of the company and forcing Felker out, giving him a \$1.8 million severance payment as balm.

WITH THE RISE AND FALL OF *NEW YORK* BEHIND HIM, Felker began the long, arduous effort to top himself—or at least to enjoy a face-saving degree of success in some new endeavor. Even the latter didn't come easy. In 1977 he talked the British newspaper baron Vere Harmsworth into buying *Esquire* for him. Felker scrapped the magazine's venerable logo and actually changed the name to *Esquire Fortnightly*. It was intended to be something of a national version of *New York*—the *New York* of biweekly men's magazines—and as such, *Esquire* became little more than Felker's attempt to compete with Rupert Murdoch. He expanded the staff and ditched *Esquire's* usual literary mix of wit and cheesecake, replacing it with *New York*-like service pieces, such as "When a Woman Is Your Boss." Editorially and graphically—his pal Milton Glaser had redesigned the magazine—Felker's *Esquire* was less highbrow and less interesting than its predecessor. And unfortunately, by upping the magazine's frequency to biweekly, Felker ran through the \$5 million Harmsworth had set aside for it twice as quickly. In 1979, when Chris Whittle and Phillip Moffitt bought into the magazine, Felker was once again forced out.

After a brief stint in California as a film consultant to 20th Century Fox—where he was hired to develop *New York*-like stories—Felker was hired in 1980 by the *New York Daily News* to edit its daily Tonight edition, the blue-collar tabloid's attempt at attracting young, upscale readers. The result was a sexy, well-edited mix of service pieces, frothy entertainment features, celebrity profiles and a gossip page—the *New York* of formerly downscale tabloids. This particular editorial concept befuddled the paper's traditional readership and failed to win a new one. Felker lasted less than a year, Tonight but a few months more: the *News* had lost \$8 million on an ill-conceived attempt to gentrify its readership, and Felker had a second high-profile failure on his résumé.

Licking his wounds, Felker left for the West Coast once again, this time to run a string of weekly shoppers. This proved to be a brief exile. In 1982 Felker returned to New York under the auspices of *Adweek*, where he stayed as a consultant until—restless, eager to leap fully into the journalistic fray—he started the *East Side Express*, an Upper East Side weekly newspaper that was to focus, according to *Advertising Age*, "in a chatty way, on life-styles, trends, marketing, media and the social scene." It was a familiar Felker brew—the *New York* of weekly uptown-neighborhood giveaways—and it suffered what was becoming a familiar Felker fate. Losing an estimated \$50,000 per week, the *Express* lasted less than four months before Leonard Stern, who bought the paper from Felker and his partner, pulled the plug.

Felker continued on, the former thoroughbred now something of a plow horse. He returned to *Adweek* as its editor in chief in 1985. To no one's surprise, Felker tarted up the magazine with a gossip column, a "Hot" list and a new, breezy tone—the *New York* of advertising-industry trade magazines. He left, of course, after six months, to serve as a consultant at *U.S. News & World Report*—perhaps in an effort to turn it into the *New York* of third-string newsweeklies. It was from such backwaters that *Manhattan, inc.* owner D. Herbert Lipson plucked Felker to take over his magazine.

"Hey, Clay, great news..."

Felker's appointment signaled to the fickle magazine crowd that they should once again start paying attention to his pronouncements, which had over the years evolved into increasingly vague, ethereal mumblings. The well-written, smart-ass brainchild of editor Jane Amsterdam, *Manhattan, inc.* had been the new magazine since it was launched in 1984. Writers such as Ron Rosenbaum, Michael Thomas and John Taylor fenced politely but devilishly with their businessman subjects—rarely shedding blood, but almost always tattering their targets' pin-striped suits enough to reveal vanity, arrogance or greed where they existed.

And in those mergers-and-acquisitions-crazed days, they existed everywhere—even within the breast of *Manhattan, inc.'s* owner. Herb Lipson had fought with Amsterdam over her refusal to cozy up sufficiently to advertisers. He had argued with editors over an article that made fun of men who wear red suspenders (apparently Lipson's son affected the look). Unable to bear his meddling, Amsterdam had resigned in the spring of 1987, with many of the magazine's senior staff not far behind her.

In the wake of these walkouts, Felker's task was a daunting one. The remaining staff was shell-shocked after being leaderless for the month following Amsterdam's departure, a problem compounded by the fact that Felker let several issues go by before hiring the bulk of his own group of writers to commence what many—inside and outside the magazine—assumed would be the inevitable *New York*-ification of *Manhattan, inc.*

FELKER, BY NOW A VETERAN OF MORE THAN TEN magazines, was accustomed to handling an apprehensive and vaguely resentful work force. He knew what to do. He held a staff meeting, invited everyone in to talk to him individually, gave them raises and, in many cases, doled out promotions to fill some of the empty spots where "Jane's people" had been. Then he went on vacation.

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He had been at the magazine little more than a week.

Still, the staff was happy simply to have an editor. And Felker seemed a nice enough boss, for a legend. What came as a surprise to those who had never worked with Felker was his method of expression. Contrary to what one might imagine—the founding editor of *New York* magazine firing out clever story ideas like rounds from an AK-47—Felker tends to have a dreamy, elliptical way of speaking. That's the charitable way of looking at it. The uncharitable way is that he often doesn't make sense.

In the first all-staff meeting Felker attended at *Manhattan, inc.*, everyone was asked to stand around their new leader in the art department—a telling venue, for Felker cared deeply about the way his magazines looked and would often stress style over substance in the next three years (good photos were often criteria enough to qualify a story for *Manhattan, inc.*'s cover during his tenure). After a brief introduction by Lipson, Felker outlined his agenda. It was an interminable talk—repetitive and full of the names of Felker's famous friends—that left many mystified. He spoke, in disjointed catchphrases, about the global economy, about Japan, about interconnection and especially about power.

"Manhattan," he said as he looked over the eager, bewildered faces of his new staff, "is...a state of mind."

After the meeting, there was much intercubicle discussion. Was their new editor a drinker? Was it age? Had they all somehow missed the point? The confused staff finally decided that what Felker was trying to say was that everything is connected to Manhattan in some way, so therefore *Manhattan, inc.* could feel free to write about the whole world. It was the first sign that as he had done at every other magazine he had edited, Felker wanted to broaden *Manhattan, inc.*'s focus so he could try to take the magazine national.

More details about how the specialized, borough-specific magazine should now tackle the planet were supplied a few weeks later.

"Think of New York," Felker said at a staff meeting, "as Manhattan." That seemed clear enough. Felker forged ahead. "Think of Staten Island...as Los Angeles! Think of Queens...as Washington! Think of the Bronx as...London!" Once again, staffers filed out into the halls wondering just exactly how to decipher this latest ersatz haiku.

There are endless stories about Felker's vagueness, most of them told—in a kind of affectionate, that-crazy-guy tone—by former staffers from his various magazines. His otherworldly

desk manner—tipping back in his chair to place one very small, custom-clad foot on his desk, smoothing his hair over and over as he ruminates—is widely imitated by those who have worked with him. He once failed to recognize an editorial staffer who had been with him for half a year ("Do you *work* here?" he asked. "What do you *do*?"). He asked *Newsweek*

writer Jennet Conant (later *Manhattan inc.*'s senior writer) to lunch for what she assumed would be a job interview—

but to her surprise, he also invited his friend Taki, the society writer. Toward the end of the lunch, during which discussion centered

primarily on sex on Greek yachts, Taki excused himself.

Felker looked at Conant and

discreetly asked, "So how long have you been seeing Taki?"—confirming the writer's suspicion that Felker had no idea who she was or why she was there.

But if Felker often seemed

befuddled, he could also be forceful and incisive. "Felker's impressive to listen to," says Philip Weiss, a *SPY* contributing editor who wrote for *Manhattan, inc.* under both Amsterdam and Felker. "He's smart, and certain parts of the New York power structure he really knows cold. But editors exist in time, and he came out of a classic age of magazine journalism—the sixties and seventies. I don't think he understands the younger generation quite so well."

"Felker has aged worse than most editors," says another of his writers, "because he has always tried to make it with these finger-on-the-pulse-type magazines. You get old fast that way."

At *Manhattan, inc.*, Felker did a lot to solidify his reputation as an editor slightly out of step with the times. The magazine's 1988 list of "New York Power Brokers," a retread of an annual *New York* feature, included such relics—and Felker cronies—as Gloria Steinem, Betty Friedan, Jimmy Breslin, Jack Newfield and Felix Rohatyn. He edited according to what he heard on the cocktail circuit, often letting the gossip he picked up from old friends take precedence over a writer's reporting. He referred repeatedly—and rather touchingly—to aphorisms from Gail Sheehy's self-help books, and to things Gloria Steinem had once said to him. He filtered *Manhattan, inc.* through a *New York*-circa-1972 time warp and helped dull the magazine's cutting edge.

Many point to the stock-market crash of October 1987—five months after Felker took over—as the event that made *Manhattan, inc.* irredeemably irrelevant. Felker worried that postcrash disaster stories—like the fall of Shearson Lehman's Peter Cohen, for example—were too depressing. *What's upbeat?* he would ask. *What's happening now? What's the new business?* While fascinating Wall Street wreckage was washing up on the beach, Felker was out looking for the next wave.

"To me, one of the problems at *Manhattan, inc.* was that Clay never stopped thinking in a weekly frame," says former *Manhattan, inc.* senior editor Amy Virshup. "A monthly magazine shouldn't simply be reacting to the news. It should somehow set an agenda, or think deeply about what's going on in a new way." A former *Manhattan, inc.* writer agrees: "A

"Manhattan," Felker said, looking over

the eager,
bewildered faces of
his new staff,
"is...a state of mind"



Manhattan then: Felker (second from left) with Jimmy Breslin, Tom Wolfe and publisher George Hirsch in the halcyon days of *New York*'s infancy

more nuanced, institutional, anthropological focus on things is not Felker's worldview."

There were other obstacles. Felker is not an editor who likes to be argued with. When confronted with an opinion different from his own, he is liable to bellow (in what Gail Sheehy has called his "triple-testicle voice"), "Why am I being thwarted?" Or, when a writer turns in a story that doesn't reflect the view Felker wanted it to take, "I told you what the fuck to do! Why did you fucking let me down?" In fact, while many of the people who have worked with Felker feel protective of him (a writer once noted that he could "emanate a plaintive, compelling need.... You want to help him because the magazine is all he has"), his temper is so notorious that an editor who was with him at *Esquire* says if she ever saw that his hair was mussed—supposedly a bad sign—she simply went home for the day.

In his *New York* days Felker was also famous for telling young writers that he was going to make them stars—which, in fact, he often did—and this highly charged style of mentorship continued at *Manhattan, inc.* His theory, a number of his protégés suspect, is that young, ambitious professionals tend to be less confrontational and will do what he asks—or at least disagree respectfully. "Clay does not want the aggravation that comes from dealing with established writers," says a former *Manhattan, inc.* contributor.

In view of Felker's multipublication career, his editorial emphasis on media stories sometimes led to delicate situations. An oft-cited example is an article on *The Village Voice* by *Manhattan, inc.* staff writer Mary Billard. The piece—originally a column about problems at the *Voice*—grew at Felker's insistence into a bloated feature, complete with a sketch of the *Voice's* 30-year history. Billard was thus in the uncomfortable position of having to report the damage done to the paper by her own boss, Felker, during his time as editor of the *Voice*. There was no way to be both tactful and truthful, and before the piece was finished, Felker himself had written the paragraph about his tenure at the paper. Unsurprisingly, it read nothing at all like the version of events portrayed in practically every other account. In his book about the *Voice*, *The Great American Newspaper*, Kevin Michael McAuliffe wrote, "[Felker] had taken over a publication that was supposedly dying and reduced its profitability by almost half." The Felker version: "Under...editor-in-chief Clay Felker, the *Voice* started a period of sustained growth...."

Other times, Felker's lack of objectivity was more insidious. Not long before he and Felker became partners at a downtown weekly giveaway called the *Battery News* (later renamed the *Downtown Express*), financier James Wolfensohn's name came up at a *Manhattan, inc.* story meeting as a possible profile subject. "I don't think that's a good idea," Felker said simply. A few months later, staffers found out why. The opportunities involved in dual editorships became even more apparent when two *Downtown Express* advertisers—Century 21 Department Stores and Bazzini's nut shop—just happened to appear as the subjects of pieces in *Manhattan, inc.* "Every time we turned around to do a story," says one writer, "we were staring at some allegiance."

To *Manhattan, inc.'s* credit, sacred cows were not always a problem. Despite owner Herb Lipson's eagerness to count

Donald Trump among his friends, he did not interfere with the fairly tough Trump profile that ran in the April 1988 issue. (It turned out Trump was untroubled by the story—in fact, soon after it came out, he was lunching at the Four Seasons with Lipson and Felker, trying to pitch a puff piece on the *Trump Princess*, which eventually ran a few weeks later in *New York*.) And though Philip Weiss's account earlier this year of the ugly dissolution of Dick Snyder and Joni Evans's marriage must have ruffled a few feathers in Felker's circle of friends, Felker never attempted to influence Weiss or to water the piece down.

LATE IN 1988, FELKER HIRED KEN EMERSON, A FORMER *New York Times Magazine* editor, as executive editor of *Manhattan, inc.* Emerson, accustomed to *Times*-style office politics, immediately alienated most of the magazine's staff by sucking up to Felker on the one hand and lording his authority over the rest of the magazine's editors on the other. Emerson often went straight to Felker, rather than to the editor of a story, when he felt a piece didn't "work." And in one instance, while privately agreeing with the magazine's editors that a story Felker suggested on "Black Power Brokers" was a terrible idea, Emerson did a quick about-face and fawned over the suggestion when it came time to argue the point with Felker himself. The staff, which had previously been cohesive even under difficult conditions, began to lose heart.

That was inside the magazine. Outside, Felker was pursuing other interests. In April 1989 he bought the *Battery News*, in partnership with James Wolfensohn. The investment seemed like a good idea, what with the growing commercial and tourist interest in places like the World Financial Center, South Street Seaport and TriBeCa—all of which were within the *Battery News's* franchise.

"I own it. It's mine. I have equity in it," Felker uttered those words over and over to whoever would listen, like a public mantra, in the months after he and Wolfensohn poured roughly \$750,000 into the paper. He began to spend more and more time away from *Manhattan, inc.*, where he was only a hired gun, albeit a \$250,000-a-year hired gun. Friday was the *Battery News's* closing day, a day Felker was generally absent from his regular job. On other weekdays he interviewed and hired people for the paper out of *Manhattan, inc.'s* offices. His concern with what was going on at the *Battery News*—right down to cracks in the back window of the new offices—was complete. "It was annoying," says one *Manhattan, inc.* employee. "Our own magazine was falling apart, and he was spending all his fucking time running [the *Battery News*]."

In happier times, Felker had always managed to keep the magazine's editorial offices relatively free of Herb Lipson, a man who is widely disliked by his employees and whose own disdain for journalists and journalism is plain ("All editors are neurotic," Lipson informed the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in 1988. "Most writers know exactly what they're going to say.... No matter what the subject says, they're not going to change the writer's point of view"). But now Lipson took advantage of Felker's absences by visiting the editorial offices more frequently. Upset by a flurry of bad press suggesting that *Manhattan, inc.* was in serious decline—at \$6 a year,

subscriptions were selling at an 83 percent discount on the magazine's \$3 cover price—the owner tried to take hold of the reins. Last year, on the day that a story about Aspen was due to close, Lipson saw the caricatures that were to illustrate it and screamed at the art director, "What the fuck is your problem?! These are too California!" Was this a New York story? he wondered. How many New Yorkers were mentioned in it? At the eleventh hour, he ordered the illustrator to pick out New Yorkers—whether they were central to the story or not—and redo the illustrations. Clearly anxious about the earlier attempt to nationalize *Manhattan, inc.*, Lipson felt it was time to backpedal.

The disintegration showed everywhere. A look through the 37 issues of *Manhattan, inc.* edited by Felker reveals a magazine adrift. There are the trademark Felker subjects: Hollywood, society, the media. There is an obligatory Ralph Lauren cover story (done, of course, with the designer's approval), a cover on "Power Couples," an abysmal Jay McInerney short story about the stock-market crash, a life-style story on the barn-building craze. And, adding to the sometimes unwieldy mix, there was Felker's obsession with Eastern Europe at story meetings in the last few months of the magazine. On the business side, the constantly changing focus of the magazine made it tough to hold on to advertisers. As one business staffer puts it, "One month we had John Reed [Citicorp's CEO], and the next it was White Russians. My biggest problem was that people would say, 'I love the magazine, but what is it?'"

Meanwhile, Felker's *Battery News* was having its own problems. Shortly after they bought it, Felker and Wolfensohn discovered that the paper was carrying \$100,000 worth of un-paid-for ads (they were later compensated for the deficit). It functioned for six months with no clear business plan and changed its advertising strategy in a poorly conceived attempt to get national and even international advertisers—Felker wanted to attract European travel companies rather than the local advertisers ordinarily associated with a community handout. To top it all off, the paper went through a flurry of name changes, finally settling on *Downtown Express*. Which may have been another blunder: a Lower East Side club-listings paper called *Downtown* is currently fighting to get Felker to downplay the word *Downtown* in his paper's logo.

"Clay," says Mike Hurley, one of the *Battery News*'s former publishers, "is a much better editor than he is a businessman."

Unfortunately, he wasn't doing all that well at the time in the former role, and finally Lipson had had enough. On June 21 of this year, the *New York Post*'s Page Six informed the staffs at both magazines that *Manhattan, inc.* had been bought by Fairchild Publications and would be merged, staff and all, with the aristocrat-manqué men's magazine *M*, to form the new magazine *M Inc.*, which was quickly nicknamed Mink. Despite the easy meshing of titles and

demographics, it was a move that seemed less inspired than desperate. *Manhattan, inc.* had lost more than \$10 million in its six years of existence and needed more money, and so Lipson had decided to bail out. (Industry sources say Lipson had at one point been offered \$20 million for the magazine.) *M* was Fairchild's curiously halfhearted attempt at giving *Esquire* and *GQ* a run for their money. *M* looked good, but it needed editorial ballast, which *Manhattan, inc.* would putatively provide.

It was a shotgun wedding, and the initial signs were ominous. At an early meeting of both editorial staffs, Jane Lane, former editor of *M* and now the editor in chief of the odd new hybrid, could not name a single *Manhattan, inc.* story she had read, much less been impressed by. Felker, according to sources both inside and outside *Manhattan, inc.*, was as surprised and discouraged by the merger as the rest of his staff and responded to the news in true Felker fashion—by going on vacation. Even so—and despite the fact that

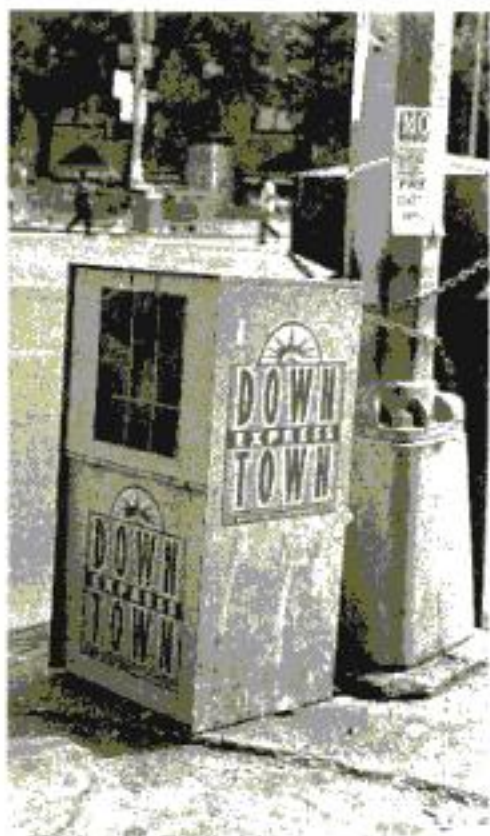
he has been relegated to a subservient position as editor-at-large (Jane Lane is at least 20 years his junior and made her reputation as a fashion and society writer)—Felker's influence was readily apparent in *M Inc.*'s surprising, generally strong debut, especially in its not-strong choice of another "Power Brokers" cover story, this one featuring Felker's *Downtown Express* partner James Wolfensohn alongside several *New York* and *Manhattan, inc.* power perennials.

Felker is said to be extremely disheartened that he could not persuade more of his staff from *Manhattan, inc.* to join him in this new venture, a failure he views as personal betrayal. But he is putting a good face on things, publicly denying the universal expectation that he will not stay long at *M Inc.* And either way, he still has the *Downtown Express*.

"I own it. It's mine. I have equity in it."

IT'S EARLY 1990, AND CLAY FELKER ISN'T IN THE OFFICES of *Manhattan, inc.* Nor is he checking in at the *Downtown Express*—not exactly. What he's doing is standing all alone out on the south bridge of the World Financial Center, passing his hand over his hair while he stares intently at a stack of newly delivered *Expresses*. The papers have lately been disappearing very quickly from their various racks around town, particularly from this location, and Felker is certain the competition—a listings and phone-sex giveaway called *New York Press*—has been stealing them. He has wanted to hire someone to stake out the south bridge, but his employees have told him no, don't bother, it's just that his paper is very popular. But he doesn't believe them, and he'll look into this one himself, thank you. There's a lot at stake here, so what's a few hours spent making absolutely sure his *Downtown Express* gets into the right hands? He waits and watches. After all, this could be the big comeback he's been working for. ■

"Manhattan, inc. was falling apart, and Felker was spending all his time running the Downtown Express"



"I own it": the giveaway news box Felker keeps an eye on

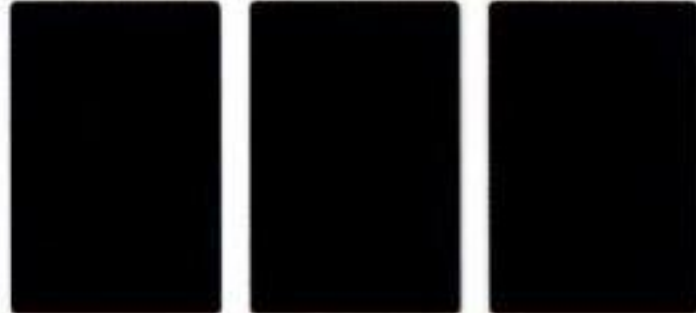

SPY'S

THIRD ANNUAL CELEBRITY PRO-AM IRONMAN

by John Brodie, Michael Hainey & Leland Scott



Party BOWL

Who WILL EAT  AND DRINK THE MOST
FOR FREE? WHO'LL  BEST REPRODUCE,
IN A COUNTRY SETTING, THE STRAIN AND *horror* OF
MANHATTAN *socializing*? WHICH TEAM, THE EAST
COAST OR THE WEST COAST, WILL DRIVE *farthest* FOR THE
LEAST *fun* (A WEST COAST SPECIALTY)? WHICH OUT-
STANDING INDIVIDUAL WILL REVEL WITH THE LEAST
SELF-RESPECT? WE'LL *find out* AS THE 1990 TIME
WARNER HAMPTONS CLASSIC CELEBRITY PRO-AM IRONMAN
NIGHTLIFE DECATHLON CHAMPIONSHIP GETS UNDER WAY!

IRONMAN NIGHTLIFE DECATHLON CHAMPIONSHIP



Welcome to seaside East Hampton, home of this year's Time Warner Hamptons Classic Celebrity Pro-Am Ironman Nightlife Decathlon Championship. A lot about The Classic has changed in this, its



third year. For example, it's called The Classic. But most important, The Classic, like so many other major American sporting events, has acquired a corporate sponsor. With tremendous pride, we welcome Time Warner on board as the underwriter for this year's tournament—Time Warner is providing transportation and elegant accommodations for five of The Classic's top competitors, and the main event is a screening and party paid for by Time Warner.



And how about this beautiful course? In previous years, Ironmen have competed on the rugged, wintry links of downtown Manhattan, where nightclubs outnumber mailboxes, and meat trucks rumbling by at dawn are only one of the tricky hazards. For summer play, we've shifted the scene to the South Fork of Long Island, but don't let the refreshing sea air and the *thwack* of tennis balls fool you. As we'll soon see, the Hamptons provide their own special challenges to the unwholesomely expert bon vivant!

Left: Mort Zuckerman's place. Right: the West Coast squad—left to right, Molly Ringwald, Beau Bridges, Elizabeth McGovern, James Woods, Peter Weller





The 1990 contest pits some outstanding West Coast stars against the best the East has to offer. For the West, a squad of young movie actors: Molly "Betsy's Wedding" Ringwald, James "The Boost" Woods, Beau "Not Jeff" Bridges and Elizabeth "She's Having a Baby" McGovern. Also Peter Weller, whose chin is known to millions. And for the East? The finest Ironmen on these Atlantic shores: publisher Mort Zuckerman, editor Morgan Entrekin, Abe "I Could Confess to a Murder in My Column and No One Would Notice" Rosenthal, socialite Bianca Jagger and many more. (His fans will be disappointed, but master Ironman and Time cub reporter Carl Bernstein, like all Time Warner employees, is ineligible to participate.)

On August 11 in East Hampton, Home Box Office, a subsidiary of Time Warner, will show its special *Women & Men: Stories of Seduction* to a select audience of 450. The West Coast squad performs in *Women and Men*, which consists of adaptations of stories by Hemingway, Mary McCarthy and Dorothy Parker. Publicist Peggy Siegal has arranged a fabulous dinner for the cast and the audience at a fashionable boîte to follow the screening of the cable show. The entire event is a promotion for a one-shot special on cable television, and the summer nightlife Ironmen will be out in force—no private lobster picnic on the beach for them, no moonlit sail with the kids, not when a publicist is throwing a party, putting up velvet ropes and calling in the photographers!

Remember, the East Coast has the home-field advantage. But in the crucial, high-scoring small hours, the West will benefit from the time difference—3:00 a.m. will feel like midnight to visitors from California. And, of course, endurance will be key, for in East Hampton the Ironman's social life goes on round the clock—breakfast, softball, drinks, lunch, tennis, cocktails, dinner, drinks, breakfast, swim, brunch and so on.

The 1988 and '89 Ironman champion, Anthony Haden-Guest, now retired from official competition, will provide expert commentary and analysis. And once again a crack team of undercover SPY umpires has kept pace with the players in a Ford Tempo, the official car of the Ironman Nightlife Decathlon. Let's join them.

LOCATION: AUSSI, IRONMAN-VENUE OPERATOR HOWARD STEIN'S RESORT OUTPOST IN SAG HARBOR DATE: FRIDAY, AUGUST 10

-  **9:15 p.m.:** Ironman Mixed Seniors champs **David Brown** and **Helen Gurley Brown** arrive to host ostensibly private dinner party for **Beau Bridges**, **Peter Weller** and **Molly Ringwald**. (Brown is coproducer of *Women and Men*.) They eat on veranda, overlooking harbor. SPY umpires are seated on neighboring banquette. SPY unit includes **comely female operative** of patrician bearing.
-  **10:01 p.m.:** **Gurley Brown**, wearing backless dress, leans back in her director's chair, unwisely extruding thick lip of ancient flesh.
-  **10:20 p.m.:** **Ringwald** honors neighboring tables, and probably **harbor boats**, with loud explanation of her philosophy of life. "I just think that life is too short, and if you see something, you should go for it and make it yours." (First score of contest. An **8.5** to **Ringwald** for talking about Big Questions in restaurant with **Helen Gurley Brown**.)
-  **10:26 p.m.:** **Ringwald** visits powder room. **Comely female operative** follows. **Ringwald** (after borrowing **comely female operative's** powder): Do you know where to go around here?
Yes—go to the Tavern.
What goes on here otherwise?
Well, tomorrow night there's a party at the Maidstone.
Well, I kind of have a party to go to for something I just finished, and I kind

of have to go. (**Ringwald** on a roll: a **9.6** for frank admission that she is *required* to go to big Time Warner party tomorrow night.)

LOCATION: THE TAVERN AT BOWDEN SQUARE, SOUTHAMPTON. JUNIOR MEMBERS OF MAIDSTONE AND MEADOW CLUBS. BROOKS BROTHERS. TOP-SIDERS. PAR-TAY! DATE: SATURDAY, AUGUST 11

12:45 a.m.: **Ringwald**, **Bridges** arrive in silver stretch limo. **Weller** and **leggy blond companion** arrive in chauffeured Mercedes. (**8.7** to **Ringwald** for heeding socializing advice of complete stranger in ladies' room.) **Bridges** buys a round and roams bar looking like **Deputy Dawg**. (Pure talent—**9.1**.) **Ringwald** spurns anonymous suitor in **madras shirt** who asks for a dance.

1:15 a.m.: **Bridges** and **Ringwald** depart. **Weller** recalls his days at Circle Rep for **aspiring actress** in torn jeans and halter top. **Aspiring actress** kisses **Weller** sloppily on cheek (**9.4**).

1:24 a.m.: Loud words ensue between **Weller** and **leggy blond companion**. They depart. (**Weller** scores again: **8.7** for public fight with beautiful woman.)

1:45 a.m.: A sweep of East Hampton and Southampton night spots reveals no trace of East Coast squad members. **Mort Zuckerman** has had dinner at agent **Mort Janklow's** with a small group. (Finally: **7.9** to East for inevitable "**Mort**, say hello to **Mort**" vaudeville routine.)
TOTALS: East—**7.9**. West—**54**. The West takes a commanding early lead.

LOCATION: CANDY KITCHEN, BRIDGEHAMPTON DATE: SAME

7:50 a.m.: Heavy rain forces cancellation of strong East Coast event: Sag Harbor Saturday-morning "**celebrity**" softball game. A bitter blow as East Coast loses crucial opportunity to have "fun" with people useful to career, social status. Another Saturday-morning institution goes on as scheduled and provides some consolation as failing-upward financier **Pete Peterson** holds court in booth of this modest soda shop. (False-humility points: **8.7**.) **SPY** umpires note **Peterson's** views on **Japan** and **Iraq**. (False-profundity-but-they're-buying-it points: **8.5**.)

LOCATION: ZUCKERMAN RESIDENCE, EAST HAMPTON DATE: SAME

1:00 p.m.: **Zuckerman** is giving lunch for **James Woods**, **Weller** and **Bridges**. (West Coast scores decisively: **26.7** for free meals.)

1:15 p.m.: **Woods** tires of chatting with fellow guest **Helen Gurley Brown**. Seeks out and scratches ear of **black Labrador**. Strolls down to water's edge. He and **SPY** umpire stare at crashing waves.

SPY umpire comments, "Nice, isn't it?"

"Yes, I like it here, although it's not like **California**." (**8.8** for reinforcing idea that West Coast team would rather be elsewhere.)

1:30 p.m.: Lunch. Dressed in green T-shirt, **Zuckerman** forces his guests to eat on terrace despite drizzle. (**8.9** to East for showing off oceanfront property in the rain.) He is giddy. *Movie stars!*

TOTALS: East—**34**. West—**89.5**. The East better make a move—*soon*.

LOCATION: EAST HAMPTON CINEMA, EAST HAMPTON DATE: SAME

7:15 p.m.: Ten local cops create Hollywood-premiere-style runway that allows celebrities exiting their limos to walk past adoring peasants and photographers as they enter theater for superspecial screening of HBO show.

7:20 p.m.: Arrivals begin. **Woods** goofily takes snapshots of paparazzi (**9.1**). **Peter Ustinov** and **Julian Schnabel**, a walking "Separated at Birth?" pair. Ballet patroness **Anne Bass**. Presidential sister-in-law **Lee Radziwill**. Journalist



Haden-Guest Chalkboard

*If you're in a part of the world
you don't know, it's
perfectly proper to ask questions of
someone you meet in the loo.
Well done!*



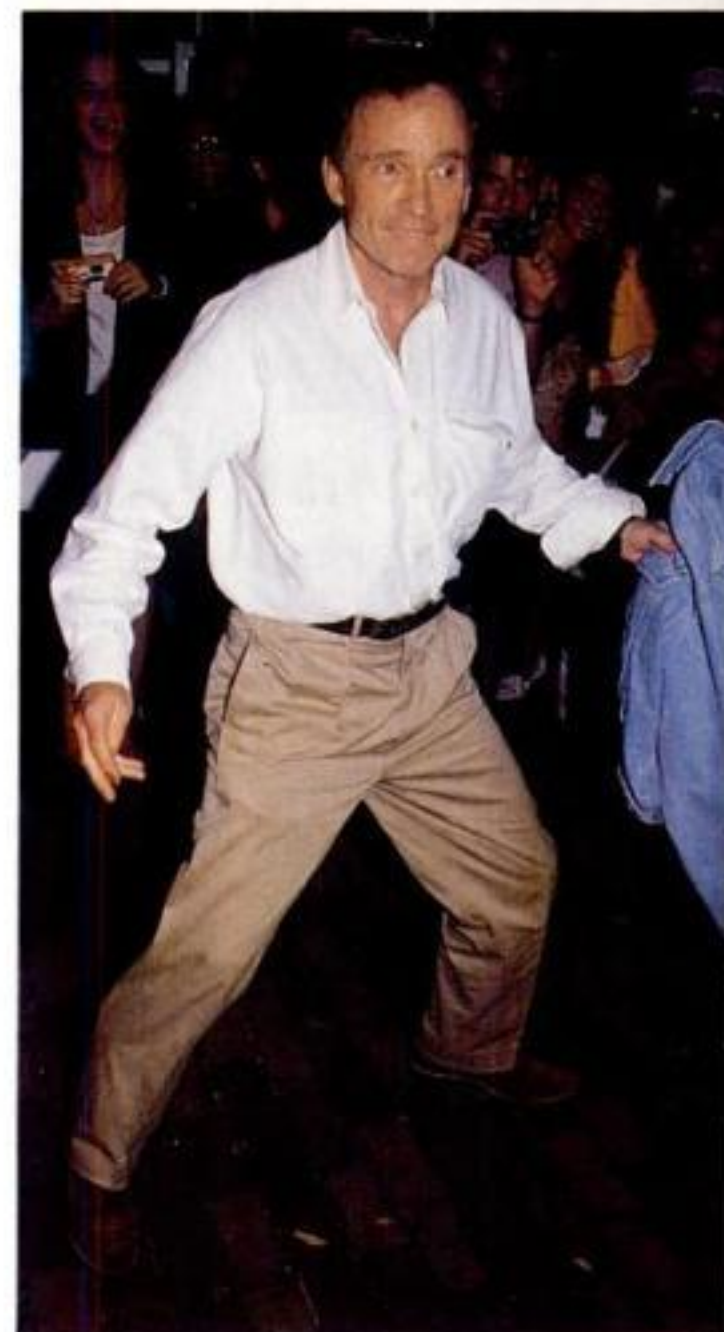
AT THE HBO SCREENING: above, David Brown and Helen Gurley Brown; below, director Herb Ross and the person he married, Lee Radziwill, are interviewed by socialite turned HBO reporter Nina Griscom as the paparazzi cheer.



Haden-Guest Chalkboard

*Here's a HAMPTONS HINT. If you know about a great dinner party
out here, persuade some friends who are going to it to have you for the weekend.
As a country bouseguest, you'll be included in all invitations.*

YES, IT'S ME!!
Swinging
Dick Cavett
arrives at the
screening.





THIS IRONMAN IS WORK: Big girl Patricia Kluge, the ex-porn-performer and billionaire's near ex-wife, strides into the screening with big girl teammate Shirley Lord Rosenthal, the dirty-book writer.



WHERE AM I?: Left, Kurt Vonnegut arrives with wife Jill Krementz. Meanwhile, right, laffs all around as James Woods photographs the photographers!



WE COULD HAVE STAYED HOME!: Sally Quinn and Ben Bradlee fulfill their Ironman obligations, grimly facing all the attention.



GOOD FRIENDS, GOOD TIMES: At Sapore di Mare, left to right, Bob Colacello, ubiquitous Mort "the Sport" Zuckerman, Bianca Jagger

Ken Auletta and agent Binky Urban with East Coast Ironman silver medalist Morgan Entekin (the team expects a lot from him). Itzhak Perlman. Abe Rosenthal. Dick Cavett. Ron Perelman. Pat Kluge and Abe's wife, bosomy dirty-book writer Shirley Lord. Ben Bradlee and Sally Quinn. A billionaire, a billionaire's near ex-wife, another billionaire's ex-wife, the greatest violinist in the world, the former most powerful journalist in the world, one of the most powerful journalists in the world, the best-known young book editor in New York, the world's greatest (or at least most expensive) painter under 50: truly the cream of the East Coast has shown up tonight to meet the performers — not-all-that-famous performers in a cable-TV show, mind you — *in person*. Two people involved in the production are nowhere to be seen. Melanie Griffith, an actual movie star, played opposite James Woods in one of the stories but chose not to compete this weekend. Steve Ross runs Time Warner and owns a huge house in East Hampton, next to Steven Spielberg's. He apparently has figured, *Why be bothered entertaining these minor actors when I can palm them off on Zuckerman and he'll be thrilled?* (Here comes the East. Scores for attending the screening have a degree-of-gratuitousness rating, determined by the judges' reckoning of whether a contestant should have had something better to do. A true Ironman goes to *any* social event, so remember the Ironman Nightlife rule: the richer and more successful the contestant and the more pathetic the party, the higher the contestant's score. Sample scores: Ustinov: 4.3, Schnabel: 9.4, Bass: 9.3, Entekin: 6.3, Perlman: 9.9, Rosenthal: 9.2, Cavett: 2.1, Perelman: 9.7, Kluge: 9.4. East Coast Weighted Average: 9.4×5 [adjustment for number of West Coast contestants] = 47.)

8:20 p.m.: Usher asks manager to turn up air-conditioning as sweaty VIPs begin whining. Manager refuses.

9:45 p.m.: Abe Rosenthal is first out of theater and on his way to dinner at Sapore di Mare. (A 6.6 for Abe.)

TOTALS: East—87.6. West—98.6. The East is catching up!

LOCATION: SAPORE DI MARE, WAINSCOTT DATE: SAME

10:20 p.m.: Security is tight. East Hampton town cops drag one paparazzo out by her feet. A SPY operative grabs unit's cellular phone and storms one door. "I have an urgent call for Mr. [Christopher] Whittle," he exclaims, spuriously. "I must bring it to him." Security men inform him that "there is no Mr. Whittle on our list." All SPY operatives are trained to read upside down, however. This one rushes to the next entrance, announcing, "I have an urgent call for Mr. [Bruce] Wasserstein. I must bring it to him." Security man looks quickly at guest list and says, "Please, go right in."

10:26 p.m.: SPY operative helps himself to smoked salmon, roast lamb, herb pasta with sun-dried tomatoes, strawberries, whiskey. Strawberries are out of season now. Local tomatoes, corn, peaches are at their best. Blues are running. But true Ironmen avoid them in favor of smoked salmon, sun-dried tomatoes, free whiskey. (East Coast Adjusted Score for eating publicist's catered food when the best fresh food in the world is available: $8.8 \times 5 = 44$.)

10:30 p.m.: Molly Ringwald stands alone in center of tent, rebuffing the advances of a number of well-wishers. (An 8.3 for aloofness.) Suddenly, Morgan Entekin approaches. Ringwald talks with him cheerfully. East Coast team captain Zuckerman sees this opportunity and comes over to help out. Ringwald ignores him. (No score. East Coast misses a fine opportunity.)

10:35 p.m.: Popular teen-book author Kurt Vonnegut sits at corner table with his wife, name-dropping photographer Jill Krementz. (9.7 to Vonnegut for spirits consumption. The winner of this event! 9.1 to Krementz for her Ironman-circuit ubiquity.)

11:15 p.m.: Zuckerman and his date, Blair Brown, along with Lorne Michaels, join Bianca Jagger at a quiet table. Zuckerman, losing Ironman spirit, talks about Iraq.



Haden-Zuest Chalkboard

No,
I shouldn't
think Colacello
had been to
the beach
that day — or
ever, indeed.

"Why do you have to mass troops at the border?" **Michaels** tries for save by bringing up more summer-Ironmanly subject, **tennis elbow**. (**Jagger** earns 8.6 for enduring simultaneous conversation with **Zuckerman** and **Bob Colacello**.) Meanwhile, **Ringwald** has joined East Coast star **Entrekin** at his table. (**Entrekin** save! A 10.0.)

🕒 **11:20 p.m.:** On nearby country road, man's man and brand-new *Esquire* editor in chief **Terry McDonnell** races motor of his manly black Jeep. Nature has called—his **female companion** scampers into woods and hikes up her **party dress**. (8.9 for conversation that must have preceded this.)

🕒 **11:30 p.m.:** **Woods** and **Weller** play it cool. **Woods** sits with his parents. **Weller** scans room silently while **leggy blond from Friday night** speaks to him. (8.9 for ignoring beautiful woman.)

🕒 **Midnight:** **Bridges** offers advice to youngsters: "Oh, yeah, that's what I did, too. I joined the **Coast Guard**. That's a good move." (7.4 for self-revelation to strangers,

7.5 for subtle *Sea Hunt* allusion.) **Bridges** approaches **Entrekin's** table and says he's going to "that **Aussi place**." **Weller** says, "Okay, we'll all go." This invitation does not include **Entre-**

kin. (2.0 apiece for snubbing **Entrekin**.) **Woods**, **Weller**, **Ringwald** and **Bridges** leave party given in their honor, stranding 450 major league East Coast **socialites** with plates of **cold lamb**. **McGovern** has long since disappeared. (East Coast Adjusted Score for staying at party for minor movie stars after minor movie stars have left: $8.7 \times 5 = 43.5$. West Coast score for snubbing everybody: 8.5 apiece = 42.5.) **TOTALS:** East—221.4. West—181.2. What a turnaround!

LOCATION: AUSSI, SAG HARBOR **DATE:** SUNDAY, AUGUST 12

🕒 **12:50 a.m.:** **SPY** monitors overhear police officer tell doorman, "If you let that guy get tanked up in there and drive his **motorcycle** home again, I'm going to shut this place down." Writer-actor **Chuck Pfeifer**, the East's most explosive natural talent, has arrived. He was at screening and dinner but lying low—the East's secret weapon. A former model, **Pfeifer** is well known in these parts as man who pursues women barely out of high school; it is said that he once accidentally tried to pick up his own **niece**.

🕒 **1:00 a.m.:** Rising to challenge, **Bridges** takes to dance floor with **frisky woman** half his age. He boogie-oogies impressively. (Give the man a 9.6.)

🕒 **1:30 a.m.:** **Pfeifer** pulls up a chair behind **Woods**, who he says is "an old friend." **Pfeifer** addresses back of **Woods's neck**. **Woods** does not respond.

🕒 **1:35 a.m.:** HBO reporter **Nina Griscorn** dumps pitcher of water and two glasses of wine on **Pfeifer's** head. (A beautiful Lycra-clad woman pouring liquids on your head—that's a Nightlife Decathlon 10.0.)

🕒 **1:45 a.m.:** **Pfeifer** departs to return to New York in Town Car driven by **Asian chauffeur**. (**Pfeifer** gets a 9.9 for hiring limousine to bring him out to Hamptons for party and back to New York on same day.)

🕒 **1:55 a.m.:** **Ringwald** leaves field to teammates **Weller** and **Bridges**.

🕒 **2:00 a.m.:** **Bridges** boldly joins **Elle Macpherson** for *digestif* on veranda. (Short middle-aged man imposing himself on young fashion model: 9.5.) Her **French escort** pays (!), although **Bridges** pulls out **wad of bills**. (Flashing wad: 8.8. Free-drink points plus no-cost-gallantry



REMOVE ZE HAND, S'IL VOUS PLAÎT: left to right, Beau Bridges; a Frenchman; Elle Macpherson, the Frenchman's date



Haden—Guest Chalkboard

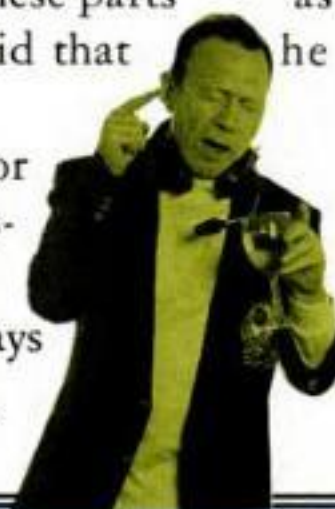
There's no point in being polite to a movie star. They don't understand it. You've just got to jump in the limo if you want to go along.



I HAVE MANY, MANY INTERESTING THOUGHTS: right, demure, lovely, hypnotized, Molly Ringwald watches the action.



WINNING STYLE: left, Dick Cavett, comedian, demonstrates the ever-popular "spit take"; right, actor-playboy-writer Chuck Pfeifer is traveling by limo, but why not wear the Harley leather?



Haden—Guest Chalkboard

When I was a young man, we had a bit of a rule during the debutante season that you'd only travel an hour and a half from London for a party—and that's when you'd be staying overnight, mind.



THE WEST. LOOSE, COCKY: Peter Weller and Beau Bridges at Aussi



MISSED BY THAT MUCH: Teammate teasing as James Woods ribs Peter Weller about Weller's brush with stardom



WORD PROBLEM: above, if the car is moving at 30 mph and Beau Bridges does manage to avoid it, how many cocktails has he consumed?



SO, NOW WHAT HAPPENS?: Main Street, Sunday morning. The psychopath stalks his prey. Hats off to wardrobe for Woods's perfect weekend costume.

THE HAPPY COUPLE: Journalism Antichrist Christopher Whittle (second from right), is greeted at airport by Princess Priscella Rattazzi (far right).



bonus: $8.7 \times 1.5 = 13.05$.)

- ⌚ **2:10 a.m.:** A lone waif drifts by an abandoned banquet, looks both ways, then drinks four half-full flutes of champagne.
- ⌚ **2:15 a.m.:** A film enthusiast stops **Bridges** to discuss his performance in *The Other Side of the Mountain*. Back at her table ten minutes later she comments, "I've fucked enough stars to know." (Give **Bridges** an **8.8** for whatever they talked about.)
- ⌚ **2:37 a.m.:** **Weller** and **Bridges** finally call it quits. **Weller** and leggy blond companion climb into silver stretch limousine. **Bridges** follows circuitously.

LOCATION: THE HEDGES INN, EAST HAMPTON **DATE:** SAME

- ⌚ **2:52 a.m.:** When limo arrives, **Weller** and companion walk quietly together to guest house. **Bridges** joshes with driver and takes circuitous route toward hotel. (Difficulty walking: **8.9**; chauffeur-pal: **8.5**; last one home: **10.0**!)
- TOTALS:** East—**241.3**. West—**258.35**. Incredible tension. The West has retaken the lead. Can they hold it? It all comes down to Sunday.

LOCATION: MAIN STREET, EAST HAMPTON **DATE:** SAME

- ⌚ **10:54 a.m.:** **Woods** up and about, enjoying stroll alone. **No score.**

LOCATION: THE HEDGES INN, EAST HAMPTON **DATE:** SAME

- ⌚ **11:30 a.m.:** No sign of **Bridges**, **Weller**, **Ringwald** or **McGovern**. Decathlon scoring in East Hampton continues through Sunday. The West, unfamiliar with rules, may not realize this. Thinking it has won, the West has quit!

LOCATION: ZUCKERMAN RESIDENCE, EAST HAMPTON **DATE:** SAME

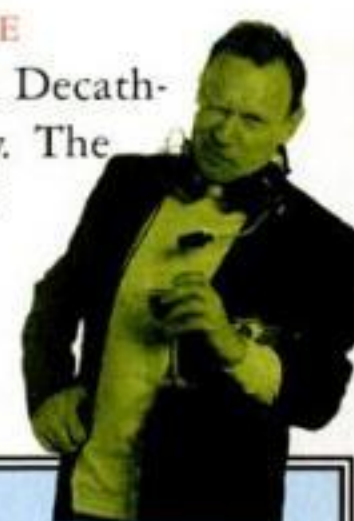
- ⌚ **1:00 p.m.:** **Zuckerman** has East Coast guests for lunch, and that should do it! **John McLaughlin**, writer **Edward Jay Epstein** earn **8.6** free-meal points each, and **Jeffrey Steingarten**, *Vogue's* food critic, a weekend guest, gets a solid **8.0**. **266.5**! The East is ahead, and the West Coast isn't even playing! It's the East's to lose, and they look rock-steady. Table discusses Iraq as **Zuckerman** and guests play *McLaughlin Group* home game. Then, between predictions ("a shooting war within three weeks"), **Mort** casually mentions that he had "some movie stars" for lunch the previous day, but the conversation returns to Iraq. **PENALTY!** **PENALTY!** Failed name-dropping! Deduct **9.3** from the East! **Zuckerman's** flub costs the East the championship!

LOCATION: WHITTLE RESIDENCE, EAST HAMPTON **DATE:** SAME

- ⌚ **7:50 p.m.:** Arriving variously by Ford Tempo and by rubber raft, commando-style, SPY umpires converge on unfinished home of Journalism Antichrist **Christopher Whittle**. Umpires are present in anticipation of East Coast protest that **Whittle's** supersecret, intimate wedding, taking place this evening, should be included in scoring. **Whittle** is marrying Warhol-diary entry **Princess Priscella Rattazzi**, but wedding does *not* count for Ironman purposes because (1) it occurs after the final gun at 4:30, the official end of Sunday tennis, and (2) it is simple, small, private. **No score.**
- FINAL SCORE:** East—**257.2**. West—**258.35**. West Coast wins!

What a thriller. The West Coast certainly deserved a hard-won victory—you hate to win on a penalty, but they'll take it. The Ford Tempo MVP, and this year's individual Ironman Nightlife Decathlon champ, can be only one person. **Beau Bridges** takes the award for that daring, brilliant 2:00 a.m. run on Saturday night that brought the West back into the lead.

That just about wraps things up here in East Hampton. Congratulations to the West Coast team, and especially to MVP **Beau Bridges**. See you next year! 🍷



Haden-Guest Chalkboard

Two problems here. First, *Mort should follow through:* Yes, well, as Jimmy Woods was saying about Iraq when he was by for lunch yesterday...
Second, the other guests did understand what Mort said, but not having been invited to lunch the previous day, they ignored it. Teamwork, lads!

BY HALF

BY HUMPHREY GREDDON

REVIEW
OF
REVIEWERS

The editors have adopted no formal policy governing the choice of books to be reviewed or critical perspectives to be explored; they invite suggestions and contributions from all quarters.

not mistake such tolerance for wishy-washiness on the part of the journal's editors. Quite the contrary:

This pluralistic stance does not imply advocacy of critical eclecticism; diacritical discussion entails distinguishing the methodological and ideological issues which critics encounter and setting forth a critical position in relation to them. Review articles, which are the principal component of each issue, should both provide a serious account of the work(s) under consideration and allow the reviewers to respond by developing their own ideas or positions.

Admirable intentions, but I confess that I am a little confused by this passage. True, English is not a Romance language, but I still think it is unfair for the Department of Romance Studies at Cornell University, when trying to describe in a simple paragraph the aims of its journal, to put English words together according to the rules of some different language entirely. Pluralism, but no eclecticism, rather...um...rather, what exactly, again, and how is it different? *Diacritical* discussion apparently entails describing certain issues and having opinions about them—and normal discussion doesn't? And somehow this kind of discussion precludes eclecti-



ILLUSTRATION BY STEVEN GUARNACCIA

cism? Review articles should provide a serious account (*not* a frivolous one) and should allow the reviewers (but aren't the reviewers *writing* the review?) to develop their own ideas. Really? In reviews? Just one paragraph, yet so much to think about!

Like the search for the Northwest Passage, the search for the perfect opening to a review has inspired acts of great boldness and great folly, sometimes with tragic consequences. Breezy and confessional, seventies-style, Nora Ephron caused real suffering with the beginning of her front-page review of *Get Shorty* in the *New York Times Book Review*: "I am an Elmore Leonard fan. I tell you this primarily so you will understand that I would never, ever, under any circumstances read a review of a new Elmore Leonard book. I am not even sure what I'm doing writing one, except that it gave me the opportunity to read the new Elmore Leonard before anyone else." In other words, *I'm not even sure what I'm doing writing a review for the front page of the Book Review of an author whom I still think I'll look really cool by liking even though the Elmore Leonard thing among literary types sort of peaked in 1985*. Poet Thom Gunn put thousands of readers in a dangerous trance state when he began a review in *The New Republic* with this poetical grabber about verse in 1990: "It seems a lean time for poetry." And John Simon dared one to continue beyond the lead of his *New York* magazine review of the slight *Broadway Jukebox*, beginning with a flourish typical of the dinner-partner pedant: "On his way out after the opening of a new work by his rival Stève Passeur, the French playwright Alfred Savoir exclaimed..." Two French playwrights; a witticism. An *exclaimed* witticism by one French playwright about another French playwright. My nerve failed me, and I could not go on. The urbane, fearless Simon (*My name is Simon*—John Simon) won his dare, and I pity the house he challenges at baccarat.

The problem of the opening is grave—enter Srinivas Aravamudan. The lead review in the summer *diacritics* is Mr. Aravamudan's, and he treats *The Satanic Verses*. He begins, "Can't I Sass Ever?" Can it be? An anagram? Aravamudan explains,

A modestly outrageous way to begin considering a book that is itself at once amazingly modest and outrageous might remark [note that—in English—a "way" can't remark anything] that its title (with its article suspended) forms an uncanny anagram: *The Satanic Verses* yields the question-event of an extratextual voice, pleading and boasting at the same time—"Can't I sass, ever?" A gratuitous play on my part, no doubt....

Gratuitous? One might just as well say that the first four notes of Beethoven's Fifth are gratuitous. Aravamudan's innovation—an anagram of a book's title (with its article suspended)—makes irrelevant all previous efforts to eliminate the problem of bad leads. With luck and a little perseverance, we can make a world where all reviews begin this way, and we will wonder how things could ever have been different.

While Aravamudan's insight has seemingly limitless applications, Ralph Novak recently provided an elegant solution to a problem of intense interest to the specialist—how best to review a courtroom drama. Like all great ideas, it was breathtakingly simple, and like all great ideas, it is not really a *new* idea. Writing in *People* about *Presumed Innocent*, the genuinely likable Novak chose the form of, well, a *courtroom drama*: "PLAINTIFF: May it please the audience...DEFENDANT: Objection!...JUDGE: One more outburst like that and I'll clear the omniplex!" Think of it—the way technology is advancing, you can almost imagine a time when reviews will write themselves. Bring on *Bonfire*!

Tragically, a lead can sometimes metastasize and, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, consume an entire article. For argument's sake, let's say you want to read an opinion piece in *The Wall Street Journal* by Amity Shlaes headlined FRANCE RERITES LANGWIDGE—TEACHERS PLEEZED. Maybe you've read elsewhere about the decision by the French government to officially simplify spelling, and you fear that the half-truth you've told yourself for years—that you can at least still *read* French—will lose whatever validity it might once have had. Or perhaps you are connected to the Department of Romance Studies at Cornell, and so take a professional interest in this matter. For whatever reason, you decide to read

the *Journal* article, and you assume that the headline is just a lapse into heart-rending fatuity by an overworked editor who knows a lot about credit markets.

Then, like distant thunder, the little italicized identification of the author creates a sense of foreboding: "*Miss Shlaes works at the Wall Street Journal.*" But you dismiss your worries—no doubt this is the work of the same editor, and there's an end to it! So you read the first paragraph:

Nooz kums to us frum France that the guvermint has decided to spell French more like itz spoken. Mostlee, the 1,200 odd changes arent big ones—they lopped the little hats off the "i's" and "u's" and they took away some hyphens. All rite. But how kum? Their reasons are suspishus.

Easy now. All right. Okay. It's the opening paragraph, for goodness' sake! Amity Shlaes is being a little cute in her lead, is all. Remain calm.

But no. On and on and on it goes: "The guvermint hopes the simplifcashun will aid foriners....Az for hifins mebbe the French arnt doing themselves a favor...Yurp [the continent]...The French say it wud be better tew spill unyun like [az?] itz spoken....Websturs will rilly be pleezed," and the last words, "Problee, we shudnt worry." Miss Shlaes, I would worry.

I would also worry that some kind of mass delusion about the cleverness of this approach to the story gripped the *Journal's* talented staff—or, worse, that an era is upon us of new jokes derived from the classic subway ad for a speed-writing course ("IF U CN RD THS MSG..."). So imaginative did the editors find Amity Shlaes's piece that they ran five letters in response to it, and each one was spelt out phonetically; "I kant tell u how aksited I wuz reeding Miss Shlaes's artikal about Frnch," one South Carolina reader wrote. One admires the *Journal* for consistently trying to offer some witty cultural reporting to its business-minded—and, of late, mostly job-hunting—readership. Man does not live by bread alone, after all: he lives by bread and water. And that's what the *Journal* provides.

"Kant eye sas, ehvur?" Mr. Aravamudan, meet Miss Shlaes. You should have a lot to talk about, if you can find a common dialect. ■

UN-BRITISH CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS

1. *Age I moan* rearranged ("confounded").
5. *OMB* in *bed*.
13. The back is the *rear*, and a *range* comprises burners.
18. I believe this is the first time we have had the same word twice in the same puzzle. It just...happened. I thought it fitting that *interference* should run into *interference*; but let me be candid. I couldn't find anything else that would fit in here. Ofttimes, a puzzle is like tea leaves: it will form the patterns that it will form, and we are ill advised to interfere.
21. Uncle Buck, Buck Henry, Buck Rogers, Pearl Buck and Buck Mulligan. Mulligan—Stephen Dedalus's friend in *Ulysses*—was based on Joyce's contemporary Oliver St. John Gogarty, a literary doctor and politician of Dublin who once escaped from kidnappers by diving into the Liffey.
23. The *Enola Gay* bombed Hiroshima. That is to say, the people in her did.
25. *Disarmed* is won over. To *dis* is to show disrespect, or to scorn. A reflection of *Mr.* is *rm*, and *Ed* is *Ed*. "If you look far enough back in anyone's life," a friend of mine observed recently, "you will find that she was once married to someone named Ed." The truth may be that everyone, deep down inside (with the possible exception of, say, Maya Angelou), is, or at least used to be, someone named Ed. And by *everyone* I do not mean just "all husbands"—though I would like to think that I can say to any woman reader who assumed that that is what I meant that I know what she means. True, I have never had a husband, but I have been two of them, and in each case I believe I can say that one of my not unreasonable grievances was: what was so wrong with being, deep down inside, someone named Ed?
26. To *depose* someone is to get him or her off the throne.

DOWN

2. A straightforward enough clue, I should think. The real puzzle is in trying to come up with something helpful to say about outing: gay activists' narking on people for being gay. (I spell it with a *k* because *narc* doesn't look right, and the noun *nark* meant "stool pigeon" in England as early as 1859. *Narc* as a

synonym for *snitch* undoubtedly derives, however, from *narcotics agent*. I first heard the verb, in reference to non-drug-related tattling, ten years ago when my daughter brought it home from eighth grade. How any middle-aged person who is not a parent can expect to keep up with the evolving language, I don't know; in due time I suppose I'll be relying on my grandchildren, who will be saying, "All right, I skipped study hall, but Jennifer didn't have any business outing me.") The crux of the matter of outing is that it *ought not* to hurt someone's career, as an actor or an umpire or an investment banker, for the public to learn that he or she goes for persons of the same sex. At present it does, though; people who come out of the closet almost have to make a career out of being out. For people who have made that career choice—the editors of *OutWeek*, for example—to force it upon others is a bit like career soldiers' insisting on universal military service. Perhaps what is needed is something like the moment in *Spartacus* when the Romans want to identify Spartacus so they can execute him, and everybody starts saying, "I am Spartacus." The president could go first: "Okay. We *do* need new taxes. I actually *can* speak English. And here, at last, is the story on me and Dan." Sorry. Not helpful. Okay, let's leave the Republicans out of it. When I was in the eighth grade, we moved to Dallas, my first day in my new school was a Thursday, and I wore a green shirt. I didn't know green on Thursday meant you were a deviate, but I daresay it is on my permanent record and that is why I am not on the Supreme Court today. That and the fact that I smoked part of a joint once, in 1971. With David Souter. And John Sununu. Now you know everything.

3. Actually, I can't think of any American city that is what I would call alabaster-colored, but that's what "America the Beautiful" says. A scientifically developed flower is a *lab aster*.

20. There's *Ed* again, caught up in a *yen*. Whatever that yen is, who are we to judge him? ☺

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JUDGES' ED.

Ignorance of the law

is no excuse,

but it's understandable



If Ivana Trump can run a hotel and Kirk Douglas can write novels, I thought, *why can't I become a judge?* So I called the

THE BENCH

New York State Office of Court Administration to ask. Did I need a law degree or typing skills? Just what did I need? To be 21 years old; that's it. If I could find myself a nice New York town to live in—Jamestown, say, or Bronxville, or wherever—then all I had to do was get elected to the bench.

Becoming a town judge would mean I could skip law school and bar exams and defending people I didn't like, because the state constitution doesn't call for a law degree at the town or village level. Of the 2,400 judges holding court in New York State's smaller communities, only 20 percent have law degrees. Which is not to say that just anyone can pound a gavel—nearly 90 percent of the current judges have a tenth-grade education *or better*.

Prudently, the Office of Court Administration (OCA) requires that judges elected without law degrees attend a six-day "Basic Course" on criminal and civil law, form processing and deportment. The course finishes up with a 50-question true-false exam, for which the passing grade is 70 percent. Then, provided the judges know at least 70 percent of what they are supposed to know (and are over 21), they are empowered to throw you in jail.

There are some limits, of course. Town and village judges can issue orders of protection against belligerent spouses—no problem. But they cannot impose fines exceeding \$2,000 or pass sentences of more than one year. They can issue arrest warrants for, say, rapists, but they can't sentence them, because all felons get bumped up to a superior court. Also, there has to be reason. A judge can't go around threatening to "railroad" people if they "ever set foot" in his court. After expressing this intention to strangers in his local bar, one judge was removed from the bench a few years back, according to Ed Borelli, an official with the OCA.

Many of the subtler rules of judging are simply made up by an OCA advisory committee upon written request from judges who were wondering. For instance, Borelli advises, "You should not be holding your arraignments in driveways or in barns."

Provided the judges know at least 70 percent of what they are supposed to know, they are empowered to throw you in jail

One of the Basic Courses is taught in Buffalo, in the law office of Town Justice Eugene Salisbury. Salisbury is a champion of the no-law-degree-needed faction within New York's judiciary, which periodically expresses ambivalence about the matter. Salisbury himself has a law degree, but what is most remarkable about him, at least if you're staring at him for several hours, is what he has done with his hair. Two thick, greased locks have been combed forward from either side of the part and curled into a large O atop his forehead, like the scope on a rifle.

Judge Salisbury is a good teacher because he speaks plainly and distinctly, force-feeding hundreds of years' worth of precedent down the throats of the men and women—heavy-equipment

operators, mail couriers, state troopers and refrigerator repairmen—who would be judges. His ten pupils grapple like heroes, yellow highlighting markers in hand, as Salisbury swings them through misdemeanors, felonies, arraignments, defendants' rights, who gets to set bail ("Not the D.A.—I don't know how many irate defense attorneys have phoned me up...") and where to buy an affordable robe.

"Town and village judges are at the base of the entire pyramid of the criminal-justice system," Judge Salisbury tells his class. "All we need is a few bad apples, and we're all in trouble."

The numbers go up and down, but on average about 120 judges run into problems with the State Commission on Judicial Conduct every year. Borelli, who has flown up from New York City for a section on judicial ethics, brings an armload of cautionary tales. Until his appearance, there has been much fretting over to whom, exactly, one could go with a question. "Hmmm, that's a tough one to call," Salisbury keeps saying, never coming right out and admitting that law is a system of complex precedents that might, you know, call, maybe, for legal training. It is suggested that the county judge would be okay, until Borelli deflates this notion. "You can't call 'em up! They might be hearing your case on appeal!" Eyes shift around the room. Now the thought of having to ask smarty-pants lawyers haunts everyone with the specter of public humiliation.

Another problem, Borelli explains, concerns getting tangled up in public associations that might seem all fine and well if you're not a judge. The way New York State words it, the judiciary "cannot lend the prestige and influence of the office to advance personal or political causes." For instance, an Erie County judge was disciplined in 1987 for deciding the Sexiest Bald Man in Buffalo Contest and kissing the winner on the head.

Borelli's example prompts a round of worried questioning from the judges-to-be. "How about calling bingo?" asks a fellow. "Can't do it," says Borelli. A timid man from Warsaw County asks about hot-dog cookouts to raise money for the fire department. "Selling hot dogs is okay," says Borelli, "but not to

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Page 71: John Barrett/Globe Photos (Lord); Ron Galella, Ltd. (Woods); Sonia Moskowitz (Colacello); Marina Garnier (Felker, Vonnegut).

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Page 73: Sonia Moskowitz (Weller).

fundraise." "That's splittin' hairs," grumbles the Warsaw judge, who is upset by this snag. "We don't have that big a fire department."

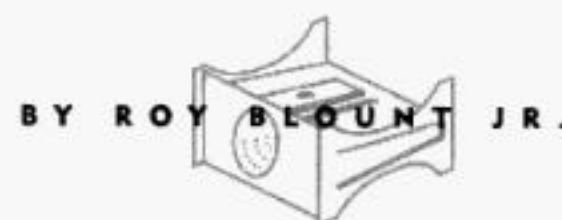
Learning to tell the forest from the trees, ethicswise, causes some consternation in the class, but an even more difficult section is the three-hour tutorial on how to fill out forms. There are so many forms, and they are so dull: traffic tickets, bail sheets, monthly court ledgers, all filled with persnickety fine print. Judges must learn about these in detail because many of them don't have clerks, and if they are not administratively up to snuff, they could get into trouble. "How in the hell am I going to keep all this straight?" mutters a retired airline pilot who has taken up judging to keep "my head from going rusty." "Who here uses docket forms?" asks Cybil Kennedy, a court clerk in Grand Island who has popped in to conduct the form session. "Well, I use ordinary envelopes," says a farmer. "Do you index the envelopes separately?" prods Cybil. There's a moment of confusion. "You have to keep a separate index," she explains, "and you have to have some sort of file for each case. You can't just throw them all in a box."

A former sheriff from Chautauqua County, dressed in a purple turtleneck beneath a pastel-plaid dress shirt, has been on the bench in his town of 25,000 for a few months already, so he provides tips. "What I do—this is my own personal thing," he says, "is I round fines off, so I don't have to make change." Why not be innovative when you're winging it anyway? "Like they said in the service," one judge reminds the others, "it ain't against the rules until you get caught."

By the end of the course, the judges seem more anxious than confident, more bewildered than eager. Having a smoke in the law-office kitchen before the exam, some complain. "They give you an example of some law, and then there's always an exception," says a math teacher. "Precedent, schmeccedent," shrugs a refrigerator repairman. So how will he know how to rule? "Well, because of evidence," he says. "You know, who's got proof." The math teacher rolls his eyes. Then everyone files into class for the test. ■

BE YOUR OWN GUY

Nobody else wants you



Even in the depths of what we feel to be humility, we may be full of ourselves. A Tennessee Baptist pastor distressed over factional power struggles within his denomination was recently quoted as saying, "We are embarrassing God."

THE UN-BRITISH CROSSWORD PUZZLE

How much more *religious* it would have been, in my view—not that I'm taking sides (this pastor, in fact, is in the moderate faction)—how much more *seemly* it would've been, surely, to have left it at "We are embarrassing." Has any religious group ever expressed concern that it was *boring* God?

But I don't come before you to rattle the chains of the Baptists, whose *fundamentalist* spokesmen (the ones who figure if God could be embarrassed by Baptists, he'd have said so in the Bible) sound more and more like the people from whom Salman Rushdie's hiding. No writer, however expansive his sense of proportions, wants to be depicted in a film as a fiendish enemy of the Nation of Baptism who in the end gets his head justly exploded by Heaven.

No, the remark that inspired this month's puzzle had nothing to do with religion, so far as I can see. Here it is: "I know people say, 'Why, George, why?' But I'm my guy. I can't change a lot."

The man who made the remark was—no, not George Shultz. Not George Harrison. Not George Jones, because then it would've been "This bottle thinks that I'm its guy./But here beneath this unlit sky,/I'm no one's guy but hers, I know,/Although our vows were several ones ago." (Incidentally, I once met someone who knew Jones's ex-wife, Tammy Wynette. "I think Tammy has stopped worrying,"

this informant said, "about who she's married to.")

The George who made the remark, a few weeks before he agreed to cease and desist from running the Yankees forever, was Steinbrenner. I heard that remark and thought to myself (who else?), *How can anybody, even George Steinbrenner, say something like "I'm my guy"?*

I'm my guy
As long as I
Have me.

"I can't change a lot," he says—he who changed managers and coaches and PR men the way people trying to shake athlete's foot change socks. He who berated fledgling players, apologized for a pennant-winning team and undermined his stars for not being like he wanted them to be.

I will psychoanalyze Steinbrenner now. His father was a hard-driving Teutonic



disciplinarian and former Olympic athlete. George became a hard-driven discipline and a sub-Olympian athlete. So he bought a bunch of athletes and took his father's presumable disappointment in him out on them. To the Yankees, he was the father his father was. And he proved that fathering like that runs sons, even pin-striped ones, into the ground.

And to himself, he's the father he wanted *his* to be. At the time that he told the commissioner he wanted to give up control of the team forever, George was all over town on *Newsweek's* cover, looking sternly, concernedly, overbearingly paternal and

called THE MOST HATED MAN IN BASEBALL.

He announced his plan to pass control of the Yankees to his son. Hank (how sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child) declined.

It isn't the Steinbrenner family curse, though, that is this puzzle's primary concern, but rather the whole notion of self-image. As it happens, I woke up this morning feeling like smearing chocolate frosting all over my body and making an impassioned statement about excrement as a symbol of how I felt. But whereas that works onstage for Karen Finley, it wouldn't for me; I'm not built for it, and I don't belong to any category of people who are generally regarded as deserving to feel unjustly despised. If I declared in my frosting, as Finley does in hers, that "in principle we are not very different [from Nazi Germany]—it's just that our ovens are at a slower speed," it wouldn't go over.

The other night, as I listened to a bluesman sing, loudly, "Stoop down, baby/Let yo' daddy see./You got something down there, baby/That beats the hell out of me," I asked a cheerful, quiet woman at our table what she did, and she gave me her card. She does holistic massage for women. ONE'S MOST IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIP IS WITH HERSELF, her card says. Guys can't carry off that kind of slogan, and white guys can't get away with singing, "Stoop down, baby."

All we can do, if we have any pretensions to political correctness, is analyze other white guys.

And what am I doing? Complaining? God, am I embarrassed.

ACROSS

.....

1. "Confounded age!," I moan in extreme self-regard. (8)
5. Office of Management and Budget, tucked in, went over like a lead balloon. (6)
9. Draws tart cats loosely. (8)
10. Speculation they put around or... (6)
12. ...ain't taken back about a brainwashed mystery woman. (5)
13. Back burners put in different order. (9)
14. Traditional urban hangout—where Lonely meets Easy, for instance. (6,6)
18. Blocking runs into itself coming down just after the half. (12)
21. Uncle Henry Rogers, Pearl Mulligan make a portrait of Lincoln. (4,5)
23. Front end of famous bomber returns unaccompanied. (5)
24. Decay consumed alternate. (6)
25. Won over scorn and a reflection of Mr. Ed. (8)
26. Get off the throne and testify. (6)
27. As one, baseball

team got annoyingly dumb. (7)

DOWN

.....

1. Demands and gets no-longer-current deeds. (6)
2. Bringing someone out for a day at the beach. (6)
3. Color of our gleaming cities and a scientifically developed flower. (9)
4. Jangling signals (see 18) trouble fencer in tree. (12)
6. Headless, parent is not the same. (5)
7. Elizabeth Barrett is sautéing. (8)
8. Yankees' last several seasons have physician and listeners surrounding male chromosomes. (3,5)
11. Pieces of the action: in the lambada, they're very close. (12)
15. One more time! Or just a single time? Another time. (4,5)
16. Disagreed when fed fried hash. (8)
17. Stuffing makes vets poot. (8)
19. With 22, Barman notes crazy motel keeper. (6,5)
20. Poor Ed is consumed by rising desire. (5)
22. See 19.

Answers appear on page 76.

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